

# LUMEN VITAE

INTERNATIONAL REVIEW OF RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

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*English Edition*

VOL. X. — No. 2-3

April - September 1955

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INTERNATIONAL CENTRE FOR STUDIES IN RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

184, rue Washington

BRUSSELS — BELGIUM

# CONTENTS

EDITORIAL : In Memoriam — The Subject of this Number — The Programme for this Year .....	239
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## THE LITURGY, RE-PRESENTATION OF SALVATION

### I. FUNDAMENTAL ORIENTATIONS

John HOFINGER, S. J. <i>Lecturer at the Chinese Seminary, Institute for Mission Apologetics, Manila (Philippines)</i> Evangelization by the Celebration of Liturgical Feasts .....	243
Joseph-André JUNGSMANN, S. J. <i>Professor at Innsbruck University (Austria)</i> Liturgy and the History of Salvation .....	261
Pierre RANWEZ, S. J. <i>International Centre for Studies in Religious Education, Brussels (Belgium)</i> Catechesis and Liturgy .....	269

### II. LITURGY AND PSYCHOLOGY

André GODIN, S. J. <i>International Centre for Studies in Religious Education, Brussels (Belgium)</i> The Symbolic Function .....	277
Pierre BLANCHARD. <i>Professor of Psychology at the Catholic Faculties of Lyons (France)</i> Contemporary Reactions to Confession .....	291

### III. CHRISTIAN COMMUNITIES AND LITURGICAL FORMATION

Henri LE SOURD, P. S. S.

*Curé of the Parish of S. Sulpice, Paris (France)*

**A Grace for Our Time : the Paschal Vigil in Parochial Life .... 315**

François HOUTART

*Secretary to the Chancery Office, Malines (Belgium)*

**A Missionary Parish in Buenos Aires ..... 323**

Jean FRISQUE

*Editorial Secretary of the Revue 'Église Vivante,' Louvain (Belgium)*

**An Essay in Liturgical Revival in a Secondary School ..... 335**

Brother MÉMOIRE-MICHEL, F. S. C.

*Teacher at the École Saint-Luc, Tournai (Belgium)*

**A Way of the Cross for the Pupils of a Trade School ..... 349**

Joseph KELLNER, S. J.

*Institute for Mission Apologetics, Manila (Philippines)*

**Singing during Divine Worship ..... 354**

Albert MATHÉ, S. J.

*International Centre for Studies in Religious Education, Brussels (Belgium)*

**Liturgical Didactic Material ..... 363**

### IV. SACRAMENTAL ACTION AND LITURGICAL FORMATION (CONFIRMATION)

Mgr Henri DUPONT

*Auxiliary Bishop of Lille (France)*

**The Pastorate of Confirmation : Administration of the Sacrament 371**

Marie-Louise and Jacques DEFOSSA

*Editors of 'L'appel de la Route,' Brussels (Belgium)*

**Vigil Preparatory to Confirmation ..... 375**

### V. INITIATION INTO THE LITURGY OF THE MASS

Marcel VAN CASTER, S. J.

*International Centre for Studies in Religious Education, Brussels (Belgium)*

**Eucharistic Catechesis Based on the Last Supper ..... 382**

Sister St. THOMAS, S. N. D. de N.

*Mt. Notre Dame Academy, Reading, Ohio (U. S. A.)*

**Our Mass : First Presentation of a Liturgical Mystery . . . . . 399**

Pierre RANWEZ, S. J.

*International Centre for Studies in Religious Education, Brussels  
(Belgium)*

**How to Introduce Children and Adults to the Mystery of the Mass 407**

## INTERNATIONAL SURVEY

### I. THE LITURGICAL MOVEMENT IN VARIOUS COUNTRIES

EUROPE : *Belgium* (Dom T. MAERTENS, O. S. B.), *France* (J.-M. HUM, O. P.),  
*Great Britain* (J. D. CRICHTON) . . . . . 417

### II. NEWS

INTERNATIONAL ORGANIZATIONS : *International Catholic Child Bureau*  
(A. GODIN, S. J.), *International J. O. C. and its Activities* (M. FIÉVEZ) 436

AFRICA : *The Belgian Congo and the Catholic Press* (A. LEYSBETH, S. J.) 440

AMERICA : *Argentina : the Schools Question* (A. IBAÑEZ PADILLA, S. J.),  
*Cuba : an Enquiry Concerning Religious Life* (A. DRÈZE, S. J.), *Uruguay :  
an Organization Preparing Girls Beginning Life* (J. LLUSSA, S. J.) . . . 443

ASIA : *Formosa : the Situation of Missionary Catechesis* (P. RAMSAUER, S. J.),  
*Philippine Islands : the Institute for Mission Apologetics* (J. SEFER, S. J.) 448

EUROPE : *France : the National Congress of Religious Education* (P. RANWEZ,  
S. J.), *Greece : Religious Formation of Youth* (Marc MACRIONITIS, S. J.),  
*Italy : Religious Instruction in the Primary Schools* (Silvio RIVA), *Spain :  
Catechism Day* (A. ZULUETA, S. J.), *Sweden : Religious Education in Swedish  
Public Schools* (Sten RODHE) . . . . . 451

### III. PUBLICATIONS

FRENCH LANGUAGE : *Belgium, Canada, France, Switzerland* (P. RANWEZ,  
S. J.) . . . . . 470



## EDITORIAL

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IN MEMORIAM. — ‘*Lumen Vitae*’ review and Centre have lost a great friend: the Reverend José Llusa, S. J. From the first issue of the Review, Fr. Llusa gave it assistance which was as faithful as it was enthusiastic: in the first volume (1946: pp. 753-775) there appeared over his signature the account of the second Interamerican Congress of Catholic Education; in the following years, he contributed to the international chronicle. With the same apostolic ardour, he edited the Spanish-American edition of the handbooks ‘*Témoins du Christ*’ (*Testigos de Cristo*), and applied himself to their distribution in Latin America. Fr. Llusa manifested this interest in religious education, the same anxiety to work at the theoretical and practical training of catechists and religious teachers, in all the high offices which he filled: twice rector of the College at Montevideo, Superior of the Mission, then of the Argentino-Chilian Province, rector of the pontifical seminary of Villa Devoto (Buenos Aires), Superior of the vice-province of Chili. Three words of St. Paul’s sum up the ideal and the life of this man of good counsel and this holy religious: ‘*Evangelizare divitias Christi.*’

This was also the motto of another religious, one of whose articles our readers have appreciated (*Lumen Vitae*, 1951, no. 3) and from whom we are expecting further assistance: the Reverend Georges Lebacqz. In 1925, he published in ‘*La Nouvelle Revue Théologique*,’ under the title ‘*L’enseignement religieux dans les collèges*,’ an article which was instrumental in the creation of a catechetical centre. His book, ‘*La grande Amitié*’ (Brussels, Édition Universelle) bears witness to the foundations of the solid and inspiring spirituality of its author, who has heard in the depths of his heart Christ repeating to him what He told His Apostles: “*I have called you My friends.*”

We have suffered a third and entirely unexpected bereavement: M. l’Abbé De Bontridder, who was a contributor to the programme of this year, has been killed in a motor cycle accident. He joined to his profession of teacher a rare concern for a return to the sources of the Bible and the Liturgy and for a deepening of his theological knowledge. God grant that his example may be followed!

THE SUBJECT OF THIS NUMBER: THE LITURGY, THE RE-PRESENTATION OF SALVATION. — The Bible, the history of salvation: that was the subject of the first number. But this history is always current history: it is that of the People of God, of whom we, as much as our ancestor, form part in the Faith. It is therefore not surprising that the Church, the People of God on the march, relates and represents this

*history as a drama in which she wishes to associate us. And in order to do this, she is not content with narratives; she evokes reality, she introduces it by means of prayers, hymns, suggestive symbols. In her liturgy, the Church is the Messenger of the Good News of salvation, of Christian standards.*

*But, because of the continually active presence of the risen Christ in the Church, His Spouse, the liturgy is much more than an unequalled transmission of the message of salvation. The Saviour continues His work in the Eucharist, His sacrifice and the memorial of His Passion, His Resurrection and Ascension. And as all the events of the life of Christ were ordered in view of the redemptive sacrifice, the Christian feasts, commemorations of these events, are organized around the Eucharistic sacrifice which confers on them a mysterious proximity; on their part, the Sacraments, acts which the Saviour continues to accomplish in His Church, communicate to, or deepen in, us under various aspects, the fundamental disposition of the Lord, that of total devotion to the Father, of thanksgiving, of the Eucharist. So, in the liturgy, we share in the mysteries, acquiring a certain 'experience' of them.*

*The subject of the forthcoming number will be our doctrinal teaching, our systematic catechesis, concerning this vital participation and this religious experience. This teaching will help us to understand better what we are as children of God and how we should act in consequence. "Our hearers," wrote Fr. E. Mersch, "are not tabula rasa, nor a desert to be made to blossom: they are, but in terms of life, growth and grace, what has to be explained to them in terms of speculation, progressive explanations and dogmas. What they thus become by Christ will bear witness to what has been told them in the name of Christ. Their nature itself, for which God destines and adapts His gift, will be, so to speak, revealed to itself, but revealed in its extreme possibilities and transcendent ideal, in the revelation of God bestowed on it. We can go forward with confidence, quia parata sunt omnia: everything is disposed for the exact instruction which is to follow."*


THE PROGRAMME FOR THIS YEAR. — *In presenting the subject of this number, we have recalled those of the preceding and following ones. We hoped to finish the year by a comprehensive view of contemporary religious formation. The quality and abundance of the articles received for the three first numbers have caused us to decide to defer the final theme to the coming year. The number of pages foreseen for the four issues (720) will be attained, if not surpassed, by that of the three connected issues. This explains the double numbering (2-3) of the present issue.*

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# THE LITURGY

Re-presentation of salvation





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# Evangelization by the Celebration of Liturgical Feasts

## *The Missionary Point of View*

by John HOFINGER, S. J.

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Apologetics, Manila, Philippines*<sup>1</sup>

“The most efficient form of evangelization is the celebration of a feast” wrote Jungmann.<sup>2</sup> This principle, of universal application, particularly concerns the missionary apostolate. The messengers of the Christian faith have almost always realized it intuitively and put it into practice. If one day the detailed history of the missionary apostolate is written — there is none at present —<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Fr. Johannes HOFINGER was professor of Dogma and Catechesis at the Regional Seminary for South-Hopé in Peiping. Besides numerous essays, particularly on the theological groundwork of evangelization, he has written *Geschichte des Katechismus in Österreich von Canisius bis zur Gegenwart* (Innsbruck, Rauch, 1937), *Lebensvolle Glaubensverkündigung* (Supplement to the Missions-Korrespondenz, Kaomi, near Tsingtao, 1945), *Nuntius noster seu theumata principalia praedicationis christianae* (Tientsin Ch'ung te t'ang, 1947). The latter work consists of a penetrating historical-critical study, published in Pekin in 1940: *De apta divisione materiae catecheticae* (Collectanea Commissionis Synodalis, XIII (1940). Father HOFINGER has contributed many articles to *Lumen Vitae*, which have been much appreciated. As a result of recent events, the Hopé seminary has been transferred to the Philippines, where Father HOFINGER is carrying on his work, at the Institute for Mission Apologetics which is affiliated to the International Centre for Studies in Religious Formation. — Address: Institute for Mission Apologetics, P.O. Box 1815, Manila, PHILIPPINES (Editor's note).

<sup>2</sup> J. JUNGMAN, S. J., *Catéchèse*, Ed. *Lumen Vitae*, Brussels, 1955.

<sup>3</sup> Missionary science, particularly flourishing during the last decades, ought to undertake this important work. However, a comprehensive and adequate book is impossible as long as no thorough specialized studies exist. Now, in spite of the praiseworthy juvenile ardour which animates missionary science in its researches and publications, such studies are scarce. We may however note the meritorious work of Fr. X. BURKLER, S. M. B., *Die Sonn-und Festtagfeier in der katholischen Chinamission*, Rome, 1942. This obvious lack of studies on the history and laws of missionary evangelization is not unconnected with the fact that missionary science, in spite of its zeal, was sometimes conceived in a way which was not sufficiently missionary in spirit. In any case, missionary catechesis and pastorate have never been amongst its favourite subjects.

it will be seen how the missionaries of every century have endeavoured to celebrate the Christian feasts adequately and how these celebrations have indeed been one of the most efficacious means of evangelization.

It is true that the missionary value of the Christian solemnities has not been equally understood and utilized by all ; moreover, each form of celebration which has been adopted does not possess the same value for evangelization. Hence, while recognizing the merits of missionaries in this matter, it may be said that the celebration of the Christian feasts could be more clearly and fully put to the service of missionary work in general, and of evangelization in particular. This becomes more evident when we consider the value of missionary evangelization which lies in the Christian feasts and then study how this value of evangelization could be enhanced and thoroughly exploited by an appropriate form of celebration, and by the preaching of the divine word (sermon and catechesis). This article has especially in view missionary evangelization ; nevertheless, many of these considerations, and perhaps the most important of them, are equally applicable to evangelization in most of the Christian countries where the pastoral conditions so closely resemble those of the missions.

## I. THE EVANGELIZING VALUE OF THE CHRISTIAN FEASTS

### *1. The Attraction which They Hold for the Heathen.*

Like every festivity celebrated with a certain amount of pomp, the Christian feasts which we observe on the mission always attract an appreciable number of curious people. This is primarily true of that part of the ceremonies which take place outside the Church, that is, processions or paraliturgies. The decorations of the Church festivals awaken the interest of unbelievers, especially if care is taken to vary them and present new objects for their curiosity according to the season. For instance, a Christmas Crib, a representation of the Passion and of the Saviour's triumph at Eastertide. The services themselves will always draw a number of pagans and would certainly attract more were they carried out to a great extent in the language of the country. The meaning of the ceremonies would then become intelligible even to a non-initiated audience.<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> It would be a mistake to wish for greater use to be made of the vernacular in

The immediate missionary result would vary in different regions. Speaking generally, it would be more obvious among simple and more primitive people. This first spontaneous contact with the Christian religion and its life might become the point of departure for a greater attention towards Christianity and for conversion.

## *2. The Riches They Contain.*

However that may be, the evangelizing value of the Christian feasts does not consist principally in the nourishment which they provide for the simple curiosity of those outside, nor in the satisfaction, still more valuable, which they give souls seeking the holiness and riches which Christian worship contains. We do not deny the value of these immediate results from the missionary point of view ; they should be taken into consideration and utilized for missionary work. But it is elsewhere that we look for the evangelizing value proper to the Christian feasts ; we seek it where the missionary Church of the first centuries placed the unique value of her solemnities, of the ancient Easter Feast for instance : not in the immediate impression produced on the unbelievers present — they were in fact excluded — but in the teaching they held for the Christians themselves, in the formative influence of the feast, in its action, by means of the faithful, on the work of the missionary properly so-called. Thus, whatever we say of the missionary efficacy of Christian feasts applies equally to the countries where no pagan can come out of curiosity, where there are neither pagans nor the curious, but congregations of Christians who ought to draw from these Christian festivities the joy of believing and consciousness of their mission among the legions of neo-pagans, indifferent to religion.

Here is the centre of the problem. Our feasts do not manifest certain facultative aspects of Christianity, but its fundamental values. In reality, only values can be celebrated. Purely theoretical truths and facts which are not lived as values can be explained or stated, but never celebrated. It has never occurred to the most enthusiastic mathematician to ‘ celebrate ’ a mathematical formula, even that of Pythagoras. It is quite possible to celebrate Pythagoras, his merits as philosopher and mathematician, his famous personality. Christian feasts are essentially a profession of faith of the community celebrating the specifically Christian values. Ceremonies bring out

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the services on the missions, chiefly for the purpose of making the ceremonies more intelligible for the unbelieving visitor, even a friendly one. The principal argument should be to facilitate the understanding and participation of Christians themselves.



in living fashion the value of Christianity in the eyes of the average Christian. What has been too arid a formula in the school instruction on religion or the catechism takes on a living value for him. It is a time to celebrate joyfully the unmerited happiness of being able to be a Christian.

The Christian feast, therefore, achieves to an eminent degree the realization of what is needed in evangelization, especially on the missions : the demonstration of the Christian values in a luminous and attractive manner. Christianity is no longer considered and practised as a troublesome obligation, but lived as a free gift and a sacred mission.

A very important fact is that Christian feasts do not present the message of Christianity in an indifferent fashion. When the liturgical feasts of the year are well celebrated, the *essential truths and values of Christianity* shine out brightly and their content and essential elements are brought out ; for instance : our wonderful vocation to the Kingdom of God through our union with the Son of God, gift of God's love as our Brother, Master and Divine Head ; our redemption from sin for a new divine life in Christ ; the gifts of the Saviour, especially the Holy Spirit and the Eucharist ; our expectation of a future consummation and the definitive triumph of the Lord, on the day of His return in power and glory.

Thus the celebration of the liturgical year is a grand example of what in catechesis we call *concentration*, and what we are ceaselessly recommending for preaching and catechism, that is, the knowledge of how to confine ourselves intelligently to the chief themes of the Christian message or else to set clearly in relief the essential themes, while presenting them in an organic unity. Concentration means two things : concentration in the choice of matter, that is, limitation to what is essential, and concentration in the arrangement of the matter, that is, a grouping of the parts around a central point, so that from the exposition of the various articles — in this case, from the intelligent celebration of the different feasts — arises a structural view of the whole, a Christian vision of the cohesive world, which is able to satisfy the mind, fire the heart, order the life and form the personality of the Christian. How necessary this concentration is in the missions, where we have to train Christians of mettle, capable of radiating Christianity in their surroundings ! How necessary it is especially in our day, when we find ourselves faced no longer by the pagans of former times, simple folk, but by enterprising adversaries who derive the best of their astonishing power from the vigour and attractiveness of their materialistic conception of the world !

The catechetical concentration inherent in the Christian feasts



celebrated in the setting of the liturgical year differs from a systematic treatment of Christian doctrine. The methodical expositions of a religious course are not suitable for Christian solemnities. Indeed, Christian feasts do not resemble the chapters of a school catechism, dealing with a definite subject and following it systematically. A much more supple order reigns in the 'popular catechism' of the liturgical year. And this is all to the good, for this order provides an excellent basis and orientation for instruction by preaching and popular catechesis. This instruction should be distinguished on the one hand by an intensive catechetical concentration, and on the other should be freed from the tiring systematization of scholastic instruction. The manner of teaching immanent in the Christian feasts contains many lessons for us. It is therefore to our interest to study more closely this *supple method*.

It must be admitted that the subjects of the liturgical feasts interfere with one another. Yet, taken together, they constitute one unique theme: the mystery of Christ, which embraces the whole history of salvation, renews itself and is realized continually in the Church. Thus it can be said that the general theme of the Christian feasts is our sanctifying participation in the mystery of Christ, a theme progressively developed in the great feasts and liturgical seasons which determine the course of the Church's year. This does not in any way hinder the celebration of important feasts which hardly or not at all fit in with the season, as for example, the feast of the Annunciation or that of St. Joseph towards the end of Lent. Even those feasts which are notably against the logic of the calendar — sometimes they give a disorderly impression — are distinguished by their concentration in the catechetical sense. Their subject is presented in such a way that it forms part of the general theme of the Christian feasts, develops and deepens it. Here, too, it is the mystery of Christ, which is celebrated, developed, and brought to realization.<sup>1</sup>

The Christian feast is therefore absolutely *Christocentric*. If it announces something, it is the mystery of the paternal and liberal love of God, manifested and given in Christ. The grateful rejoicing of the new people of God for the incomprehensible gift of the Father, Christ, for our own insertion into Christ and His mystery, constitutes the final meaning of all the Christian solemnities.

The Christian feasts have therefore a fundamental theme in common with preaching: Christ our Head, and our Way to the Father.<sup>2</sup> It is remarkable that the liturgical year develops this theme *in the same order* in which the biblico-narrative catechesis of the first school years gives it. Although the liturgy is absolutely apart from the scholastic method, the course of the

<sup>1</sup> See the excellent study by J. JUNGMAUN, S. J., *Das Christusgeheimnis im Kirchenjahr*, in the collection *Gewordene Liturgie*, Innsbruck, 1941, pp. 295-321.

<sup>2</sup> J. JUNGMAUN, S. J., *Christus als Mittelpunkt religiöser Erziehung*, Friburg, 1939. — J. HOFINGER, S. J., *Our Message*, in *Lumen Vitae*, 1950, pp. 264-280.

liturgical year follows the Christian history of salvation in its broad lines. It conforms to the essence of the liturgy and has a great evangelizing value. Thus the kerygma of the liturgical year becomes the Good News of what the love of God has done and will still do throughout all the principal stages of the history of salvation.<sup>1</sup> But the liturgical solemnities cannot be confined in history.

By means of the Christian feast the faraway 'other times' becomes an immediate 'now,' bringing happiness, grace and courage. It is precisely that which constitutes the 'mystery' of the Christian feasts, sets them above a simple commemoration, makes them close to life, rich in experience and fruitful, efficacious. We can therefore although in another sense — apply the axiom of the Catholic sacramental doctrine to them: "*Dant quod significant*;" they make us sharers of the mystery *celebrated in them*. This is the usual Catholic doctrine, independent of theories as to the meaning and nature of the Christian solemnities. In our experience, to seek to introduce these feasts by long explanations according to the opinion of such and such a theological school does not in any way serve the purpose of Christian preaching and the liturgical movement.

Since the course of the liturgical year espouses the broad lines of the course of the history of salvation, the religious instruction during the first school years can easily be linked with the liturgical year; this is recommended by recent catechesis, and has already borne fruit. The culminating points of the liturgy will then become the culminating points of the catechetical teaching and religious practice.<sup>2</sup> Besides, the liturgical year will provide an excellent scheme for popular catechesis, for it is in fact "the classical programme for all, a programme constantly recurring and enriching souls at every season of the year, so that they are at home in its spiritual world."<sup>3</sup> The instruction of adults gains thereby that harmony which is so desirable between the proclamation of the message and the religious solemnity, and this internal unity, truly supple but very fruitful, which the evangelization of adults ought to reflect. This result is especially important in the missions, where millions of Christians can celebrate the great feasts only and are often deprived of Sunday mass and preaching.<sup>4</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Up to the present too little attention has been paid to the need for bringing out the historical nature of our religion, even in methodical catechesis and, as far as possible, in the arrangement of the subject matter to be taught. See on this subject J. HOFINGER, S. J., *Die rechte Gliederung des katechetischen Lehrstoffes*, in *Lumen Vitae*, 1947, pp. 719-741, especially p. 729 et seq.

<sup>2</sup> See J. JUNGSMANN, S. J., *Catéchèse*, p. 62.

<sup>3</sup> J. JUNGSMANN, S. J., *Die Frohbotschaft und unsere Glaubensverkündigung*, Regensburg, 1936, p. 127; cf. the whole chapter *Die Predigt als Führung durch Kirchenjahr*, pp. 127-141.

<sup>4</sup> This harmony between liturgy and catechesis is greatly disturbed when the liturgical year is commenced with Septuagesima; as for instance Pius PARSCH, *Das Jahr des Heiles*, 13th ed., Klosterneuburg, 1947, pp. 5-11. Parsch was naturally too practical to base his own book on the liturgical scheme. We do not think that the

### 3. *Their Pedagogical Excellence.*

Up to now we have demonstrated the evangelistic value of the Christian feasts by considering their content. This value is, however, not only derived from their subject matter but also from the way in which they proclaim it. A feast requires from the Christian community not only the acceptance of a teaching or a message but also its active participation in the celebration. From the missionary point of view this is most important ; in fact, the more the community engages itself in the celebration, that is to say, is not content with listening to exhortations and playing a passive part, the more we can hope to witness the Christians spontaneously and joyously affirming their Christian ideas in their daily lives and winning over their unbelieving neighbours. From active communal participation is born individual religious experience and active practice. We shall then meet with an essential element in religious pedagogy : the bringing into relief of the principles of experience and activity. Moreover, by its nature, the religious feast celebrated in common causes the weaker souls to share in the spirit of faith and religious fervour of the stronger. The numerous little flames which, left to themselves, would painfully arrive at an average height, rise together into a powerful conflagration. Have we not need of this in the missions ? Speaking direct to hearts, feasts also eminently foster the *community spirit*. During the ceremonies, the little community in a distant station feel themselves to be, not only united and associated fraternally in the solemn confession of one and the same Faith, but also supported by the immense community of saints in Heaven and on earth. They are celebrating the same feasts, professing the same ideas. It is precisely thanks to this profession of faith, that innumerable millions of our brethren have attained their full flowering in the Church Triumphant.

Here we meet with another advantage of the Christian feasts : in them *we truly experience the Church*, we feel it to be our spiritual Motherland, our mother, the kingdom of God which is coming, which calls forth, not only wonder and admiration, but also our earnest obedience, our courageous collaboration. At the same time,

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historical and liturgical reasons put forward form a solid foundation. This change does violence to the liturgy in use and uselessly wounds the healthy religious sentiment of the people ; it seriously harms the evangelistic value of the liturgical year. From the historical point of view, however, certain indications reveal that the liturgical year was not, in primitive times, considered and treated as a unity. Does it follow that the posterior evolution towards a marked unity is not really a progress ?

each feast evokes that final stage of the kingdom of God, which our earthly feasts prefigure and anticipate to a certain extent: the meeting of the Church militant and the Church which has arrived at the end of the journey. In her feasts the Church reveals herself intensely; she demonstrates her hierarchical structure and her sacramental ordinance.

The Christian in the mission needs to experience this profound sense of the Church and to find in it an oasis among the attractions and dangers of his pagan surroundings. His love for the Church, solidly established, will nourish his missionary zeal. The Catholic certainly does not work for a Christianity without a structure. If he acts in a missionary way in his milieu, it is for a visible Church, the incomparable religious value of which he has discovered by his religious experience. It will perhaps be objected that all which we have said of the value of the Christian feasts in evangelization concerns especially their *potential for evangelization*; in actual fact, this is only partially made use of. Certain realists will even add that, in the missions, this partial utilization is a very modest one. This is certainly true. But does this only apply to the evangelistic value of the feasts? May one not say the same of the evangelistic value of the Bible and the catechism? The treasure is there, but must be exploited. The question is not to know whether there has been hundred per cent in the past, but how to make the most of it in the future. We will now discuss this.

## II. HOW WE CAN MAKE FULL USE OF THE EVANGELISTIC VALUE OF THE CHRISTIAN FEASTS

Two things are preeminently necessary in order fully to exploit the incomparable missionary treasure of our Christian feasts: their celebration must be well organized and, in the sermon and catechesis of the day, the teaching of the feast must be expounded. Celebration and instruction must harmonize together and the values of which we have been speaking must be brought out as well as used. For both celebration and instruction the true meaning of the Christian feasts must be well known. In insisting, as our subject demands, on the evangelistic value of the feasts we risk giving the impression that the direct and essential aim of the Christian solemnities is Christian evangelization. This would be a gross and harmful error. *The proper object of Christian feasts can only be Christian worship*, the grateful homage of the Christian community to God, its intro-



duction into the Divine order, the communication of the Divine life, by which the Father responds to His people's homage. Finally, the worship on feast-days is not meant to serve missionary evangelization, but evangelization should rather put itself at the service of a celebration as perfect as possible of the Divine worship. The feasts are in *essence more than a solemn catechism lesson* or an exceptionally favourable occasion for explaining and creating a love for Christian doctrine ; their ultimate aim is not the knowledge of the Divine mysteries which are being celebrated, but our deep faith in those mysteries and our personal participation. The knowledge of them remains a necessary means, never an end in itself. Like religious instruction itself, the proclamation of the message, which accompanies and prepares the celebration of the Christian feasts, has principally the Christian life in view, and, in this case, the perfect exercise of solemn worship, in which the life and prayer of the community attain their culminating point. It should be so in any case. The closer we get to it, the greater the value of the festivals. Do we always take this into account in the missions ?

Far from being static, this value radiates over Christian daily life. Every feast well celebrated has its effect on life, according to the adage : He who prays well, lives well.

We will now examine how we can work for the realization of the ideal indicated. We are only making suggestions called forth by the position in the missions.

### I. *How to Organize Christian Feasts.*

The first care of the missionary will be to render *participation in the Christian Feasts possible for many Christians*, especially at the principal ones.

In missionary China, and elsewhere, practice has made the great Feasts four in number : Christmas, Easter, Pentecost, the Assumption. These feasts divide up the year very well, although the time between the Assumption and Christmas is rather long. In North China, Pentecost and the Assumption come at the season for field work, a time which is hardly favourable for a recollected celebration nor for a numerous attendance on the part of those Christians living in distant stations. All the same, the feast of the Assumption offers the great advantage to the peasant of a rest in the midst of his intense and uninterrupted labours, just before the autumn harvest, which is especially heavy. The Christian thus has an opportunity of recollection and reflection on the real meaning of his life and activities. The mystery of this feast, the Assumption, recalling the glorious consummation to which we aspire, is very appropriate here. The four great feasts complement each other perfectly and together form the celebration of the whole saving reality of

Christianity : the Incarnation, the Redemption, the fruits of the Redemption, the Last Things. In our religious instruction we must be careful not to place these four great feasts on the same level, and especially not to speak of four cycles. The catechetical formulae should also forbid this. The present official catechism for the Chinese missions is not satisfactory in this matter. Christmas and Easter should always appear as the two great feasts of the liturgical year, both in preaching and in the organization of the solemnities. " They form the two pillars. " <sup>1</sup> Missionary practice ought, it would seem, to give more importance to All Saints. Celebrated at a good time, it is particularly full of meaning (Christian life, Christian consummation). The Heavenly Harvest Feast at the end of the autumnal harvest !

Christians coming from a distance ought to be able to spend the night before the feast in the station where it is being celebrated. This is the only way in which they can take a full share in it. The expenses of their stay and food should be borne, not by the missionary, but by the Christians themselves, who would find in this an exceptional occasion for fraternal charity, hospitality and the Christian social spirit. That also represents an active participation in the feast. Obviously, the great feasts are not the only ones to be solemnly celebrated, even although they hold a privileged place.

In some missions, the missionary nearly always celebrates the feasts in the principal station of his district, which is the only one adapted for solemnities. But it would be preferable if, in the larger districts, there were a series of outposts which could serve for the celebration of some of the more important feasts, while keeping the great ones for the principal station, especially if this is central and contains the greatest number of Catholics. Where two missionaries live together, which is greatly to be desired, one of them can almost always preside over the ceremonies in the principal station, while the other can go to one of the outposts. In any case, the feasts of second class should be celebrated in the outposts where there are sufficient Catholics. All the Christians, or at least, the majority of them, will thus be able in the course of several years to celebrate once all the greater feasts of the liturgical year.

Evangelization requires concentration, even more in the missions than in Christian countries ; so does the celebration of the Christian feasts. This *liturgical concentration* will chiefly be expressed by safeguarding the *hierarchy* of the feasts. Each feast must be presented and celebrated according to its importance in the structure of the liturgical year, and its wealth with regard to the plan of salvation. This will not coincide necessarily with the rank which the rubrics accord it, nor with the personal taste of the missionary, too often determined by his own devotion, nourished by personal pious practices.

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<sup>1</sup> Cf. on this subject, J. JUNGSMANN, S. J., *Die Frohbotschaft und unsere Glaubensverkündigung*, Regensburg, 1936, p. 128 et seq.

Liturgical concentration also requires a *very special zeal in the preparation for the great feasts*, especially Christmas and Easter, even outside the principal stations. Eastertide should be celebrated carefully after Easter.

It is to be regretted from the missionary point of view that some dwell more on the celebration of the month of March as the month of St. Joseph than on the celebration of Lent. The same applies to the months of May and June. Even if the devotions of a particular month can reasonably be utilized in the missionary pastoral programme — they certainly can — they should not be allowed pre-eminence over the celebration, more important from the point of view of the pastorate, of the seasons of Advent, Lent and Easter. These holy times play such a great part in the life of the missionary Church ! Can the expectation of Advent be more in place than in the missions, where the majority of the population are still outside the messianic kingdom ? And, in the missions, do we not need the austere season of Lent for serious reflection, for renewal, in order to appear to the eyes of unbelievers as ‘ the city on the mountain,’ and to win them to Christ by the holiness of our lives ? Eastertide is meant to fill us with joy and gratitude for Christ’s glory and His Redemption, to give us a firm consciousness of our baptism and make of us the heralds of the Good News, who, like the apostles of old, ‘ could not be silent ’ (*Acts*, IV, 20) about the great things which they had experienced. To celebrate these holy times better, we should make greater use of them in the prayers of the community, in Divine service in the absence of the missionary and in the communal evening prayers. The hymns and readings <sup>1</sup> should recall them too.

The most striking feasts can only be celebrated in the more important stations. Many Christians in the innumerable little surrounding outposts will then have the opportunity of attending Divine service in a station which is not too far away. They will only, however, constitute a minority, the others will have to stay at home and cannot take any part in the celebration of the great feasts. How can they be helped ? First, the missionary will take care that the *Divine service on Sundays and feastdays in the missionary’s absence* will take the most solemn form possible in a small community without priest nor the Eucharist. Here also, hymns will play a large part. But the most beautiful singing will never replace for our Christians the Eucharistic sacrifice and banquet. <sup>2</sup>

Therefore, the missionary, urged by his pastoral zeal, will hasten to the outposts, to celebrate the great feasts later with as much

<sup>1</sup> See on this matter J. HOFINGER, S. J., *Mensis S. Joseph*, in *Collectanea Commissionis Synodalis*, Peking, 1942, 143-9.

<sup>2</sup> See J. HOFINGER, S. J., *The celebration of Sunday in the absence of the missionary*, in *Lumen Vitae*, 1953, pp. 114-118.



ceremony as possible. This visit should have a solemn character, even if it has to take place on a weekday, and should be centred on the mystery of the feast. To arrive at this, it is much to be desired that the liturgy of the mass of the feast be used in this later celebration of the great feasts. That would show that we Christians cannot live without our feasts, nor celebrate them suitably without the priest and the Eucharist. Missionary bishops would obtain the necessary authorization easily enough from Rome, for similar concessions which can hardly claim the same importance for the pastorate have been widely granted for some time. Amongst others, there is the privilege of the votive mass of the Sacred Heart on the First Friday of the month, and that of the votive mass of the Immaculate Conception on the First Saturday.

It is enough to say that a real feast should have as its centre the *celebration of the Eucharistic Sacrifice*, not only in theory but in practice. People's opinions are formed under the influence of predominant sensible impressions. The priest will speak in vain in his sermon of the Mass as the central element of the ceremonies, if he celebrates Benediction in the afternoon with much more solemnity than Mass in the morning.<sup>1</sup>

The solemnity will therefore be in close relation to the acts of worship. But do not let us confuse *religious solemnity with secular and semi-secular pomp*.

The solemnity encourages inner dispositions to prayer, gives vent to our joy, foreshadows the greatness of God. Pomp, on the contrary, tends to hide from our eyes the failings of our inner behaviour by a noisy accompaniment ; it spoils the Christian feast and is radically opposed to it. Solemnities full of elevation, majesty, as far as circumstances allow, make the feasts more vivid and increase their evangelistic value. Although fundamentally different, solemnity and pomp are often side by side in life and are hard to distinguish. Their limits are vague, for the different people and races have not the same psychological reaction to the same impression. The missionary may experience a conflict between his desire for adaptation, inclining him to let the people celebrate in their own way, and his zeal for God's House, wishing to keep the purity of worship. In any case, the decision must not depend on the missionary's personal taste and his western standards. There must be grandeur in the Christian way of worship, but no lack of spontaneity, for children are celebrating their Father's feast with joy ; a ' reach-me-down '

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<sup>1</sup> If the chief ceremony has, by force of circumstances, to be put off to the afternoon or evening, we now have, thank God, the help of evening mass ; in the missions, as elsewhere, the possibilities of evening mass from the pastoral point of view are far from having been fully exploited. The experimental time has not been long enough for this. But we should remain attentive to these possibilities.

made according to a foreign model would not be suitable. Those responsible should, in a truly sacerdotal spirit, decide the matter according to actual circumstances. Distinction must also be made between the different parts of the sanctuary. For instance, on the great feasts, we shall not condemn, as worldly, a rather boisterous procession in the church, provided that it keeps a religious character and leaves outside anything which jars with that character. In the church, the music should be silent, especially during the celebration of the Eucharist.

The problem of liturgical adaptation has also another aspect. The Eucharistic sacrifice becomes the true centre of the Christian feast, even experimentally, insofar as we are able to make the mass comprehensible and familiar to the Christian people, in the setting of the active participation of the community in the ceremonies. Here we see the importance of the *privilege concerning the use of the vulgar tongue for the singing during High Mass*. Several missionary bishops have obtained this privilege during the last years. It seems important to obtain the permission, as in Germany, not only to make use of the popular language, but to translate into that language the text of the 'Proper' by means of appropriate hymns.<sup>1</sup> The development of popular liturgical singing is the most rapid way of obtaining the active and intelligent participation of the people in the ceremonies of the mass; the communal singing makes the worship a solemn prayer and a confession of faith full of joy vividly felt.<sup>2</sup>

If we were not able to make the people understand the ceremonies of the mass, we should be tempted to take refuge in the paraliturgies and to look for an 'ersatz.' For example, in certain missions run by Germans, the custom has been established of a ceremony anticipating the feast of Christmas. A statue of the Infant Jesus is received by the community and carried into the church. The Midnight festivities may suffer from such ceremonies; they should only play a preparatory part, and not be made too prominent. We must, however, recognize the need for presenting the mystery to the senses, not only in painting, but scenic plays, in the form of biblical representations easily understood or simple 'mysteries.' This kind

<sup>1</sup> See FISCHER, *Das 'Deutsche Hochamt'*, in *Liturgisches Jahrbuch*, 1953, pp. 41-53; J. WAGNER, *Gestaltung des Deutschen Hochamtes*, in FR. ARNOLD-B. FISCHER, *Die Messe in der Glaubensverkündigung*, Friburg, 1950, pp. 321-328. — On the recommendation of the 3rd International Liturgical Congress at Lugano, 14-18 Sept. 1953, see *Liturgisches Jahrbuch*, 1953.

<sup>2</sup> On this problem see J. HOFINGER, S. J., *The Liturgical Revival in the Missions*, in *Lumen Vitae*, 1954, pp. 77-92, especially 86 et seq.; J. HOFINGER, S. J., *Akkommodation der Liturgie in den Missionsländern*, in *Liturgisches Jahrbuch*, 1954.

of celebration excites the curiosity of the pagans. In general, we have made too little use of religious drama for evangelization and for the Christian feasts.<sup>1</sup>

If we succeed in attracting the people, our feasts will sooner or later be imbedded in their customs, especially in those countries where an important part of the population has become Christian. The formation of Christian customs is greatly to be desired, for they cause Christianity to permeate the people's lives. Living religious customs possess a high value in evangelization, both in virtue of their content as of their affective elements ; they humanize the Christian feasts and their mysteries. Conscious of this value, the missionary will however keep in mind that a real custom is not made nor commanded ; it rejects a gross imitation of the foreigner. The missionary can make suggestions ; the custom must be born of the people.

Ideally celebrated, a feast should be so transparent and intelligible that it only needs the minimum of explanation, although preaching is able to make the best feast more intelligible. Historically speaking, the Christian solemnities have always been commented upon by preaching. We therefore ask now

## 2. *How Ought Feast Days to be Explained?*

The great feasts give the missionary an excellent opportunity of preaching the word of God. He will usually find a numerous and receptive audience, which many of his confrères in Christian countries might envy him. Some have come from far away ; spiritual hunger has driven them along the road, and now they want to be filled. If the feast is being celebrated in one of the chief outlying stations, the community feels honoured, for the Christians look upon the relative rarity of a solemnisation in their midst as an honour and an encouragement. Let the missionary seize the occasion eagerly ! He is well aware that the preaching is not the centre of the Catholic feast, but divine worship, especially the Eucharistic sacrifice. The sermon must therefore minister to the feast, and will therefore play an important and sacred part. The missionary will not content himself with a short sermon during the principal service. In our opinion, a complete missionary celebration requires *at least three or four sermons* ; the first on the eve, as the introduction

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<sup>1</sup> See J. HOFINGER, S. J., *Missionskatechetische Bedeutung und Gestaltung des religiösen Schauspieles*, in *Zeitschrift f. Missionswissenschaft und Religionswissenschaft*, 1953, pp. 320-324.



to the feast ; the second during the Mass ; the third during the afternoon service ; the fourth during the Mass on the following day. With regard to the diversity of circumstances in the missions, we will refrain from laying down rules as to the form which celebration and preaching should take, and will confine ourselves to our own experiences in the missions in North China. Several of the suggestions below will be applicable even in different circumstances. It is precisely this great variety of exterior circumstances which leads us to seek above all the spirit which should animate the preaching on feastdays, according to the word of the Saviour : " Only the spirit gives life " (John, VI, 63).

The sermons accompanying the feast should form one whole. This obviously does not imply a rigorously systematic scheme, like that of a series of scientific conferences, but a connected whole, arising naturally from the deliberate intention of the preacher. The feast and its mystery then form the centre of the preaching and creates its unity.

Amongst the four sermons recommended, the first, the 'instruction on confession' is, if not the most important, at least the most difficult. It is difficult because it must fulfil a double task, long and complicated, while the time at the preacher's disposal for this introductory sermon is usually limited. The missionary will give it by preference towards the evening of the day before the feast, before the adults' confessions. He will have already heard those of the children, prepared for by a talk suitable for them. The introductory sermon must set the audience in the atmosphere of the feast ; if it takes into account the capabilities and practical needs of the hearers, it will greatly facilitate the religious comprehension of the feast and intensify their participation in it. The whole art of this introduction consists in explaining the meaning of the feast in a few words, together with its importance for Christian life, and in convincing the hearers of this.

This first sermon must next constitute a good preparation for confession. In the missions, thank God, almost all those present at the feast receive the sacraments. If only we could succeed in reducing religious formalism to a minimum ! That is the aim of this preparation, which is especially important for the guests who seldom have the opportunity of receiving the sacraments, and also for the celebrations in a post which is rarely visited. It is not that the Christians in the missions lack the knowledge requisite for an ordinary confession. Speaking generally, they are not inferior on this point to the faithful in Christian countries, but all the same we have to help them to make a good confession. This preparation for confession, renewed on every occasion of a visit to the distant stations, will bear fruit in time. It also provides the best opportunity for teaching Christian morals. However, neither this teaching nor the priest's help in the examination of conscience constitute the principal task. It is far more important that the Christian, inspired by the thoughts suggested by the feast should be led to true repentance. Thus

we avoid the danger of monotony, inherent in this kind of preparation for confession. The subject of the feast will also determine the help and the impulse which we offer for the examen of conscience, which obviously cannot replace the individual's own reflection, but will serve as stimulus.

The most important sermon is that given *during the Mass*. Primarily dealing with the mystery of the day, it should lead the Christians to celebrate it with gratitude and carrying it out with joy. Here we should proclaim, as far as our weakness allows, the great things which God's love has done for us and accomplishes mysteriously in us. An ideal feastday sermon is a 'mystagogic' teaching; it introduces us further into the mysteries of the divine love, which are also the mysteries of our Christian life. For the catechetical success of this instruction on the feast, we must make the *great works of God in the history of salvation* understood and loved, with reference to the subject of the feast.

Before the simple people in the missions, and even elsewhere, this instruction should avoid penetrating too soon into the depths of the mystery. It is only when the foundations of redemption have been clearly grasped by the Christians that we can take a step further, and show how this redemptive action of God embraces our period, this very time in which the feast takes place.

This way of preaching on feast days demonstrates the *Christian values* which are to be celebrated and, by the nature of things, leads us to speak of the *Eucharistic sacrifice*. It is our solemn «Eucharist», our common feast of gratitude, by which we thank the heavenly Father for all the ineffable marvels which His love has accomplished for us and in us.

That shows in what sense our preaching, particularly the chief sermon of the feast, *should be liturgical*. In this sense first, that it will bear upon the feast and its mystery, will disclose and proclaim its meaning, without losing itself in the exegesis of the text. It may produce one or the other liturgical text by way of explanation and pause at one or another liturgical particularity. But do not let us introduce into this preaching the analytical method which is superannuated and which we have succeeded in banishing from school catechesis.

All our great feasts are so rich in their contents! In one half hour — and the sermon on the feast day ought not to last much longer even in the mission — one cannot expound more than part of it. Also, the missionary will be happy to give other lessons in the *sermon at the afternoon ceremony*. In the morning's sermon he will have emphasized the principal idea of the mystery, while in the afternoon he will deal with the subsidiary important themes connected with it. For example, on the feast of St. Joseph the meaning, value and execution of Christian work would be a very good subject for the sermon. Sometimes there is spontaneous connection with the Benediction which follows the sermon. Thus, on Christmas afternoon, is not the Benediction of the Blessed Sacrament our "Adoration of the shepherds?" Like the shepherds of Bethlehem we come with a profound faith to Christ in the Sacrament. After having in the Midnight Mass thanked the Heavenly Father for the Saviour and Brother Whom He has given us in His only Son,

now we come to Christ. We thank Him, we pay Him homage, we promise to be faithful to Him amidst the pagan surroundings. Another time, a special ceremony might inspire the afternoon sermon : for instance, on the feast of Christ the King, the meaning of the consecration to Christ the King can be treated with great profit. Such acts of consecration attain all their value only if their importance is understood, as well as their effect on Christian life, and if they are fully accepted inwardly ; for here also the festivities and the solemnity very often go hand in hand.

*The sermon at the mass next day* is very important when the missionary is celebrating the feast in an outstation. He will again assemble the community and the sermon at mass will be by way of summing up ; it will deal more particularly with the effects which the feast ought to have on Christian life. Without wishing to draw too great a distinction between dogma and morals in our preaching, for they are fundamentally one, nevertheless, one sermon will deal mostly with the great truths, another, on the contrary, with the alignment of Christian life on those truths. On the day of the feast we are chiefly occupied with the mystery ; the closing instruction will emphasize the connection of the feast with Christian life, its tasks, its practical requirements, and this in a positive manner : demonstrating practical ends, encouraging, arousing zeal. If there is anything to be blamed or corrected, that should be done in the instruction on confession, an instruction which aims at producing reflection, purification and renewal.

In the mission our preaching ought certainly to have an *unmistakable missionary character*. On ordinary days as well as on feast days, in the catechesis or in the sermons we should speak of our missionary vocation among the people in the mission. " In season and out of season " (*II Tim.*, IV, 2), let us always revert, sometimes directly, sometimes indirectly, to it, when we are expounding the religious reasons for our missionary attitude. No Christian truth and no Christian feast of any importance is without a wealth of missionary matter. Of all the sermons on feasts, that of the closing ceremony is the one which will insist most on this ' *Centrum censeo* ' of our missionary preaching. The Christian feast is both a grace and a mission. After each one our Christians should regain consciousness of their quality as God's heralds sent to their own people and the pagan masses.

If the missionary is inspired by the liturgical spirit in his feastday sermons, his preaching will take on another superiority : it will be remarkable for its *catechetical concentration*. The Church considers and always celebrates the mysteries with regard to the very centre of the Redemptive reality and according to the view of the whole of Christian doctrine. Thus in the Christmas mystery, the Church celebrates first the coming of the Saviour, His divine origin, the majesty and grandeur of His person, but this without isolating it



from His work and mission — in this respect, the classic collect of the Vigil and that of the third Christmas Mass are characteristic. — At Easter, the ceremonies first present in an impressive way the Saviour's Victory and His paschal triumph, but do not separate them from His Person, which has achieved the victory. The Paschal hymns of the Church celebrate the Saviour. This concentration, characteristic of the Church's feasts, combines with the catechetical function which they should carry out in the missions. Innumerable Christians are rarely able during the year, even on Sundays, to assist at Mass and hear a sermon. From time to time, however, they take part in a Christian feast celebrated in their station or a neighbouring one. In consideration for these forsaken children of the Diaspora, the missionary should try to shape his sermons on feast days so that they contain the greatest possible amount of Christian fare, in other words, that they should be remarkable for catechetical concentration.

The preaching cycle for feast days should therefore offer to a certain extent, especially on the great feasts, a short summary of Christian doctrine and each time should start from the mystery which is being celebrated. Overloading of these expositions must absolutely be avoided, for here also the adage "non multa sed multum" is applicable. Besides, we should talk as simply and practically as possible in an obvious order of ideas, for a well thought out order allows the hearers to understand, assimilate and more easily retain what is said.

All these recommendations may sound odd to any one familiar with life in the missions. It is easy to bestow on the missionary a heap of good advice concerning preaching, but where is the overworked priest to find the time and strength to carry them out? On feastdays and especially on the eves of feasts, his work is more absorbing than usual. Concentration presupposes, also, a thorough kerygmatic training during his theological studies. We are much afraid that up to now there are not many missionaries who can boast of this! Our missionaries are not so much in need of good advice as of *practical help*, in the form of a clear presentation of the cycles of feastdays with a good catechetical concentration. Such helps to missionary preaching do not abound. The author of this article is now preparing the publication of a series of schemes for the principal feasts of the year; experience has taught him that it is easier to lay down rules than to apply them.

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# Liturgy and the History of Salvation

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As a result of the catechetical movement of recent years it is now generally admitted that catechesis, when dealing with the truths of the Faith, should transmit to the children, not merely a considerable number of formulae to be retained, but should rather provide an attractive picture of the history of salvation, a living image of the figure of Christ, Who has come into this world in the fulness of time, has proclaimed the word of God to men, achieved our redemption on the cross and collected around Him a new people of God.

We now also understand how the liturgy of the Church can be of great assistance in the accomplishment of this task, for all the great turning points in the history of salvation are celebrated by a liturgical feast or even by a festive season : Christ's coming by Advent and Christmas time, the Saviour's Passion by Passiontide, His glorification by Eastertide, the feasts of the Resurrection, the Ascension and the Descent of the Holy Ghost ; the actual fruit of the redemption is set before us by Corpus Christi and in the feasts of the saints, distributed throughout the year. The catechist has only to adapt his teaching programme to the course of the liturgical year and, in his explanations, to attract attention to the coming feast. Its celebration will then contribute efficaciously to the imprint upon the child's soul of the corresponding mystery of the Faith.

Various articles in this number of *Lumen Vitae* will deal in detail with this catechetical value of the liturgy, and thus bring out this most important aspect of the part which it can play in religious formation, although not the only one. This opening article must look further and penetrate more deeply into the mystery of the liturgy. Holy Mass is the centre of every liturgical feast. If we are

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<sup>1</sup> See the biographical notice in *Lumen Vitae*, X, 1955, I, p. 117. — Address : Sillgasse, 8, Innsbruck, AUSTRIA (Editor's Note).

only considering the instructive side of a feast we can stop, so to speak, at the Mass of the Catechumens, for the trend of this preliminary part of the Mass is instruction : the lessons bring to our minds the event of salvation which is being celebrated. But the main liturgical action comes later : the sacrifice. God has spoken to us in the Epistle and Gospel ; now we, the assembled Church, have to speak to God, reply to Him in praise and thanksgiving and especially by the Holy Sacrifice, which we are authorized to offer to God with Our Lord Jesus Christ. The ' euangelion, ' the Good News, sent from above precedes the ' eu-charistia, ' the thanksgiving overflowing with joy, for the ' charis, ' the grace, which has been given to us.

The most recent catechesis has well understood this law, already applied in many catechisms, which aim at making the children not only understand a doctrine and perhaps store it in their memories, but respond with their hearts to God's call which is contained in the doctrine. This response is made certainly in prayer, but also in sharing in the Church's liturgy : when united in public worship we thank God for His love, through this or that prayer of the Church, in this or that of her feasts.

But this is not all. This glorification of God in the liturgy involves more than what we are now doing in common in God's House, or are trying to do individually elsewhere. By directing children to the liturgy, we are leading them to the stage on which the history of our salvation is being continued. The great event which took place in the fulness of time, is the establishing of a new order, the beginning of a new period for mankind. It was then that the grain of wheat was cast into the earth which was to bear " much fruit. " Since Pentecost this seed has grown up all over the world ; its flowering and growth have never ceased either in bad weather and storms or under the rays of a benevolent sun. The good earth which bears this multiple vegetation is sacramental life, the domain of liturgy. In the liturgy the sacraments are carried out, by which the Body of Christ is ceaselessly built up. In the liturgy the sacrifice is celebrated which Christ gave to His Church and that with her He offers to God. The liturgy forms the section of the Church's life in which the history of salvation continues with the greatest intensity.

Perhaps we have grown up with the idea that the history of salvation ended with the Ascension of the Saviour and the descent of the Holy Ghost on the day of Pentecost ; what followed was only the distribution of the treasures, merited for us by Christ and entrusted to His Church, only a grateful looking back to that time when salvation was achieved. Such a conception is too narrow, not



to call it inexact.<sup>1</sup> It is akin to that other idea, dating from the Enlightened Century and forming part of the deistic theories, that is to say : God created the world at the beginning, but afterwards retired from the scene and now leaves the direction in men's hands until He Himself again takes over the government at the end of the world. In the same way, Our Lord Jesus Christ in the fulness of time brought salvation through His cross and passion, and acquired a treasure of merit ; He entrusted this salvation and these merits to the fostering care of the Church ; He Himself would take no more part in what was to happen later.

This way of looking at things is incomplete, full of gaps. It is true that Divine Revelation came to an end with the death of the last of the Apostles, but the course of the history of salvation is only now coming to its full growth. Certainly, Our Lord deprived His own of His visible presence on the fortieth day after His resurrection, but the Saviour ascended into Heaven still remains through the Holy Ghost as near to them as before : " Behold I am with you all the days until the end of the world " (*Matt.*, XXVIII, 20). He said, not referring only to His presence in the sacrament, but to His will to be with His apostles and their successors, while they govern the Church and preach His doctrine. He willed to be in Peter's boat, navigating it over the stormy sea of the world's history. His saving action had to be spread over the whole earth and throughout the centuries in which the sacramental life has been carried on ; for the thousands and thousands of priests, the two thousand bishops, in the Catholic world, can only act as His emissaries. He is the High Priest who, by their ministry, baptises, confirms, forgives sins and above all renews His own sacrifice on our altars ; they are only the mouthpiece by which He speaks and the hands with which He blesses. The history of salvation which, in the days of old, Pontius Pilate being procurator of Judea, attained its culminating point on Calvary, is not finished for all that, but continues until the end of time.

We may here remark again upon the faculty which the liturgy has of transcending time and space. While the Church is continually entering upon new periods, we do not get further away from our starting point, but are always close to it. We are not launching out into unknown seas, but are describing new circles around a sun which is radiating light and warmth.

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<sup>1</sup> See F. X. ARNOLD, *Grundsätzliches und Geschichtliches zur Theologie der Seelsorge*, Friburg, 1949, pp. 123-130.

This sun is Christ and His work. He is still active amongst us in the sacraments and the celebration of the Eucharist ; especially in the latter, which is by design sacrifice and memorial. It is a sacrifice and every time a new sacrifice : the religious sacrifice of the Church at work here and now ; it is the sacrifice of former times : that which Christ offered on the cross and by which He achieved the salvation of the world. It is just as much the living memorial of the work of redemption among us : the memorial “ of the blessed passion of Christ, of His resurrection from the dead, His ascension into Heaven. ” Yes, of the Resurrection and Ascension, the glorification of the Lord ! We do not only commemorate the Lord’s death, when, under the separate species, the immolated Body, as though marked with the five Wounds, is to be seen on the altar, but also His glorification. Is it not the glorified Saviour Who puts Himself into our hands like the immolated lamb ? Is it not the glorified Saviour who, as High Priest, acts on the altar through His representatives ? At that moment the central element of the whole work of redemption enters into each of our days and, from that fact, the life and work of the Lord comes within our grasp. What the Gospel tells of Him is no longer in the distant past, but is actually perceived by us who gather round His altar, just as the men of His time thronged round Him hoping for help and salvation.

This nearness full of mystery is particularly brought out by the Eucharist in the celebration of the Christian feasts. During the course of the year we celebrate the great events in the history of salvation, from the birth of the Lord up to the diffusion of the Holy Ghost on the budding Church ; and there is not one of these feasts which does not culminate in the sacrifice of the New Testament ! Because the Eucharist constitutes the culminating point, each time, the event of salvation, the subject of the feast, becomes mysteriously near to us. That is why the Church dares to sing at Christmas : *Hodie Christus natus est* and, in the night of Easter, the deacon does not weary of proclaiming that “ this night ” is blessed which is as much the night of the Paschal feasts as that one in which, breaking the chains of death “ Christ rises conquering from the dismal regions. ”

Theologians argue much about the exact nature of this actuality. The controversy was started thirty years ago by a thesis by Fr. Odo Casel, a monk of Maria Laach († 1948), stating that the essence of the liturgy consists in the celebration of mystery, that is to say, that the event of salvation becomes present in the liturgical act ; by participation in it, the celebrating community obtains sal-

vation.<sup>1</sup> The difficult point in this thesis, called the "thesis of the mysteries" lies in admitting that a past event can truly enter the present time. Casel and his friends tried to circumvent this difficulty: certainly, the event of salvation cannot enter again into the present in a physical sense, neither can the historical circumstances become actual once more; but it is possible to conceive a 'becoming present' which would be produced in mysterio in a sacramental manner. Other authors, having recourse to platonic theories, prefer to say that it is not the event of salvation in itself, but its image which becomes present in the participants, each time they receive the sacraments (G. Söhngen). When a person is baptized, the death and resurrection of Christ are accomplished in him and he is thus justified; when we take part in the Eucharist, the immolation of the Lord is again imprinted on our soul and we grow more and more in resemblance to Christ. Still other authors think of the inner act of oblation which Christ accomplished on the cross and which is perpetuated in Heaven as the supra-temporal act, in the marks of the wounds, in the acceptance of the Father, in the intervention for us and becoming present in every Mass (L. Monden, E. Masure).

But we can leave aside this theoretical question and keep to the traditional Catholic doctrine, even if some elements in it have passed into the background of the religious consciousness of the last centuries. It should be enough for us to know that the events of the history of salvation enter *in some way* into our present, in a mysterious manner, a manner which does not occur in any other historical event. The centenary of a great historical occasion is commemorated by speeches, represented in pictures, made obvious by its effects, but the event itself remains distant, as the heroes of it remain the heroes of a time which has long passed away with them. Our case is different. Even if the events of the history of salvation remain in the past, for an act can only take place once, their hero, Christ Our Lord, is in the midst of us and in several ways.

When we think of Christ's presence amongst us, we usually think primarily and perhaps exclusively, of His presence in the Sacrament, the closest presence and the most intense, because He is present there "truly, really and substantially." But His presence does not exhaust itself there: to the Body of Christ in the Sacra-

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<sup>1</sup> We find a summary of the developments of this discussion in Th. FILTHAUT, *Die Kontroverse über die Mysterienlehre*, Warendorf, 1947. For more recent years, see B. NEUNHEUSER, O. S. B., *Mysteriengegenwart*, in *Archiv f. Liturgiewissenschaft*, III (1953), pp. 104-122.

ment corresponds the Body of Christ which is His Church. The Church becomes visible in the liturgical assembly which gathers every Sunday around the Eucharistic Body of the Lord. In it His life continues. As the organism begins by a primary cell to which new ones are continually being added, so the Lord, as the first-born of those who have risen from the dead (see *Col.*, I, 18), continually draws new persons towards Him by faith and baptism ; so the Church has become “ the fulness of Christ ” (*Ephes.*, I, 23), it is as St. Augustine says, *Christus totus*. The Church is the living Christ.

But we have to distinguish yet a third presence. Christ is not simply identical with His Church. He is its divine Spouse, its Head. Where the Church is, there is not only all those who belong to the Saviour by faith and grace, but the Saviour Himself as ‘ Head, ’ vivifying the members. This is especially true in the liturgy. Pius XII’s encyclical on the liturgy expresses this clearly : “ In every liturgical act, the divine Founder is present as well as His Church : Christ is present in the holy sacrifice of the altar, either in the person of His minister, or especially under the Eucharistic species ; He is present in the sacraments by the virtue which He infuses into them so that they may be efficient instruments of holiness ; He is present, finally, in the praises and prayers addressed to God, according to Christ’s words : There where two or three are gathered together in My name, there am I in the midst of them. ”<sup>1</sup>

And — do not let us forget — it is the risen Christ Who is among us in this way and acts with regard to us. We ought certainly to look always at the earthly life of Jesus, for we are still pilgrims on this earth and are struggling in the dust of the road. He became like us in everything except sin so that we could find in Him an example and a model, a model in our relations with men, a model for perseverance in the known good, a model of devotion to the will of the Heavenly Father. That is why it is so important, not only to read the Gospel accounts of the life of Jesus with the children, but with them to meditate upon these texts, so that we may model our lives continually upon them and learn from them how to carry out our duties. But it would be a mistake to limit ourselves to the earthly life of Jesus. He is no longer the infant in the crib, He is no longer the traveller on the stony roads of Palestine ; He is no longer the man of sorrows. He is risen ; He is “ in the glory of God the Father, ” as we sing at the end of the *Gloria*.

Besides the events of former days and the work of our salvation,

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<sup>1</sup> *Acta Ap. Sed.*, XXXIX (1947), p. 528.



do not let us neglect what is happening today and always, in which the whole of the past work of the Lord is summed up and enclosed. Beyond the earthly ways of Christ do not let us forget the Christ of the final achievement. For it is with the total Christ, glorified, that we are to be united for ever.

And we must not lose sight of our own consummation. We are already grafted into the vine which is Christ. We are already assumed in His resurrection. St. Paul says more boldly : We are already " risen with Him " (*Coloss.*, III, 1) ; God has already caused us to " relive " with Christ and has already raised us with Him and transported us to Heaven (*Ephes.*, II, 5-6). All is not, however, at an end : " it is in hope that we have been saved " (*Romans*, VIII, 24) ; we have still to hold on. But we have already received " the firstfruits of the Spirit " (*Romans*, VIII, 23) ; we have already received in us in grace the life of the resurrection, we are the risen people.

It is good and praiseworthy to describe to children in catechesis the splendours of divine grace and to exhort them to keep the garment of grace spotless ; but let us also show them the original which grace will make them resemble. Let us reveal, especially to the older ones, the great perspectives which are discovered by meditation on the life of grace of Christ at Easter, the Christ of the liturgy. Here the new creation has commenced ; here the spiritual temple is being built of living stones ; here the priestly people is assembled, from all nations and all centuries, able to offer the worthy sacrifice to God, because Christ the high priest is at its head.<sup>1</sup>

If we proceed in this way, youth will more easily understand that we have not only the duty of saving our souls, to save them perhaps at the last drowning hour of a spoilt life, but that we are called to glorify God in this world. We have to work at the building up of the kingdom of God, collaborate in the realization of the words of the prophet Malachy, seeing God in the centuries to come and crying out with divine joy : " Thy name shall be great among all nations. " We must glorify God by a holy life, by a service ceaselessly renewed thanks to the pure and holy sacrifice which is offered to God " from the rising of the sun to its setting ! "

One of the chief tasks of our catechesis is to initiate children into the history of salvation and familiarize them with the meaning of the events of redemption. This initiation must not be simply a narrative of things which have happened ; it should lead them to the knowledge of what happens now in the Church's life, of what we have

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<sup>1</sup> See the *First Epistle of St. Peter*, II, 5.

ourselves received and continue to receive as Christians, of what we are and are called to be.

In ancient Christian times the mystagogical catechesis existed. It was intended for those who had been baptized, had already participated in the celebration of the Eucharist and who should now be "initiated" further into the knowledge of the "mysteries" (*μυστ-αγωγή*). Our catecheses are fundamentally always or nearly always "mystagogic." We are dealing with baptized children and we must make them understand what they already are as children of God: they are in the light of Easter morning. We have also to show them the grandeur of the vocation which has resulted from it for them: proclaim by a holy life the acts of Him Who has called them from the darkness to His admirable light (*First Epistle of S. Peter*, II, 9). They must enter joyfully into the circle of those true adorers, who adore the Father in spirit and in truth (*John*, IV, 23).

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# Catechesis and Liturgy

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It was perhaps a temptation in the last generation to isolate religious instruction from education as a whole and to think that it could develop separately according to its own rules. If this way of thinking did prevail, it is tending to disappear and, for those who reflect upon it, catechetical teaching can only be conceived of as closely united to the other elements in Christian formation. It will be seen that the content of the instruction and the rhythm of its development, the choice of teachers and pedagogic methods are decided by what might be called "Christian initiation," a general term for all the various means used to introduce the child gradually to the free and conscious participation in the mystery of God.

It is therefore necessary first to consider what this Christian initiation is. It is the beginning of what is one day to be finished in Heaven ; it is the preparation in time of what eternity will accomplish : union with God in love by the entire conformity of the will with the Divine Will and by the Beatific vision. We know that this union will be realized in Christ in Whom we shall all form a single Body all together. Christian initiation prepares for this incorporation.

God alone can realize this supernatural task which is beyond human power. But Christ has willed that the *liturgical and sacramental life should be the efficient sign of it*.

By baptism, in every confession, through Holy Mass and prayer, the children of God are born and made to grow. Each sacrament provides the Christian with new and different graces which are the manifestation of the various aspects of the Divine Glory and Love.

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*Religious instruction should help the child to recognize this purpose of God : to recognize the Lord Who manifests Himself in the gift of Himself. In consequence, he will develop in close connection with sacramental life.*

One of the chief intentions of the teacher and catechist will therefore be to watch over the following points :

- That the sacraments are conferred at the opportune times ;
- That the child is properly prepared for them ;
- That the sacraments are performed in a respectful and expressive manner and that a commentary helps the child to associate himself with the mystery and to understand it a little ;
- That the baptized, confirmed child who is a frequent partaker of Holy Communion is helped to respect in himself the Presence Which transfigures him, and to accomplish the mission given him.

We cannot study the catechesis proper to each sacrament ; let us at least consider what should be the *general trend of liturgical catechesis during childhood* and proceed to define its broad outlines, its insertion into sacramental life and its normal rhythm.

1. *The Broad Outlines of Liturgical Catechesis During Childhood.* — The aim of catechesis during the first years is not to establishing an abstract and technical knowledge of the Christian message in the mind of the little Christian. The catechists' ambition in early childhood should be to awaken the *sense of the divine* in its various dimensions. What we call " the sense of the divine " (sense of God, of sin, of vocation, etc.) is an intellectual knowledge (not exclusively or primarily a sensible one), a practical knowledge (anterior to the reflected operation which detaches the universal aspect from its individual support and makes it workable by itself) and in consequence almost inexpressible (except in the way in which one speaks of a value which provokes admiration or repulsion, joy or fear). This true, practical and hardly expressible knowledge should — in order to be authentically a " sense of the divine " — be interiorly transfigured by the light of the Holy Ghost ; it thereby receives a depth and superhuman perspicacity with regard to the divine realities. Thus defined, the sense of the divine is the foundation of all ulterior religious knowledge. Later on, what has been vaguely conceived of as a whole will be better seen and in more detail. It will be submitted to an effort at abstraction, and one will seek to express it clearly ; the various elements in it will be organized into a systematic synthesis... But all these progresses



in thought will be impossible or illusory if a solid base, the sense of the divine, has not first been established. It is impossible to establish this foundation in the course of religious growth without the presence of loved persons through whom God can be apprehended. Without this presence the message transmitted by words or lessons cannot acquire its density and relief ; it will remain a dead letter. Vivified by the action of the Spirit and by the testimony of parents and catechists, the instructions given to the child — allusions, commentaries, short explanations — will make him familiar with the gifts of the Lord and will open to his imagination and his mind a triple perspective : towards the past, present and future.

— *Past events* will be related, especially the facts of the life of Jesus Christ ; these indeed mark the stages of the coming of God into human history of which the sacraments renew the substance ; the Mass renders the Last Supper present, confirmation perpetuates the mystery of Pentecost.

— We shall dwell on the *actual accomplishment* of the Divine Mystery in the Church and in regenerated souls, through the sacramental rites. We shall not fear to enlighten the young child's faith on the highest spiritual realities : the relation which each sacrament establishes with the Father, Son and Holy Ghost ; the new responsibility which it imposes with regard to our neighbour ; the profound transformation which is realized ; a transformation by which a child of man becomes a new creature, a child of God.

— We shall insist on the way in which the Mass and Sacraments *announce and prefigure, or rather, prepare and anticipate, the future event* already begun in Jesus Christ, with Our Lady and the saints ; for the eternal Kingdom of glory is already outlined in the souls touched by sacramental grace.<sup>1</sup>

2. *The Method of Inserting Catechesis in Liturgical Life.* — Normally, catechesis should precede, accompany and follow, the administration of the sacraments. Baptismal catechesis should be given before and after baptism, not to the infant itself, but to its parents ; the latter should then pass on what they have been told.

— *Preparatory* catechesis has as its aim to cause the child to open his soul to the gifts and light from Above.

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<sup>1</sup> The different aspects which have been considered help us to understand what the object of catechesis should be : the history of salvation, the mystery of the One God in Three Persons, the redemptive work of Christ, sanctifying grace and the duties of the Christian. In this enumeration, we shall easily rediscover dogma, grace and morals.

— A commentary will *accompany* the performance of the rites and will help the children to understand something of the mystery behind the veil of the symbols.

— The education and instruction given *afterwards* should help to make the living seed grow. The child baptized, penitent, confirmed, admitted to the Eucharist, will be encouraged to respect the Presence in himself Which transfigures him, and to carry out the mission entrusted to him.

3. *The Normal Rhythm of Catechesis in the Stages of Sacramental Initiation.* — The sacraments which make the Christian are conferred in succession : at baptism, the newly born becomes a child of the Father in Jesus Christ ; Penance restores the filial resemblance tarnished by sin ; through confirmation, the young Christian is placed under the motive power of the Spirit ; the Eucharist associates him more fully with Christ in his being and activity. This succession of the four sacraments does not by itself constitute the frame work of religious formation to the end of adolescence. After the First Communion, the sacramental solemnities come as privileged times, peaks in religious life, at the most serious moments of growth. Four religious feasts can thus signpost the young Christian's growth : baptism in his first days ; at the dawn of reason, a solemnity which includes Penance, Confirmation and the Eucharist ; <sup>1</sup> at about 12, a solemn Eucharistic feast, if possible during the Paschal Vigil, in the course of which the young Christian will renew his baptismal vows ; finally, at 16 or 17, at the time when he begins work or higher studies and at the period when professional family and social responsibilities begin to be felt, the youth or girls are invited to pronounce a promise of fidelity.

In this programme, we will only here consider the stages which concern the 7 first years. In this connection, we will describe in broad lines the distinctions between the catecheses of Baptism, Confirmation, Eucharist and Penance.

a) *The Baptismal Catechesis.* — Baptism is conferred during the first days after birth. There is therefore no question of preparing the child for it or of making him understand the meaning of the rite. This is reserved for the parents. It is a good thing to instruct them

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<sup>1</sup> The problem of the age for confirmation has been discussed at length in several *Lumen Vitae* articles. See in particular, Fr. DELCUVE, *A Necessity for the normal efficiency of religious formation : confirmation at the age of reason* ; *Lumen Vitae*, V, 1950, Nos 2 and 3, pp. 322-350.

carefully before the birth of their duty as catechists. The ceremony of baptism will be of great use as a finish to this preparation. It will be commented upon, and preceded by a family meeting with the priest at which he will explain the ceremonies, the mystery of the regeneration of the Christian and the responsibilities which fall upon the teachers, in the course of an intimate conversation or even of a family paraliturgy.<sup>1</sup>

It is on the duly prepared parents that the duty falls of instructing their children concerning the gift received at baptism. This sacrament regenerates the child to the resemblance of Jesus Christ and in Him, through the Holy Ghost, making him the Father's child. The parents will begin by gradually awakening the *sense of God*, of the Father invisible Who is revealed to us by Jesus Christ. Some will be surprised that the explicit teaching on Jesus Christ is left till later, as it is by Him alone that we come to the knowledge of the Father. We reply that Jesus is actually present and acting in the Church of which the parents are members ; they are therefore the witnesses in Jesus Christ to the glory of the Father and it is their mission to manifest it to their children. Before touching upon the historical memories of Jesus' time upon earth, the small child ought to meet Him in his living contact with his parents. The essence of their task does not consist in telling stories, however pious, nor in giving explanations, however, clear, but in being themselves before and with their children, the imitators of Christ and witnesses of His Presence.

In and through their love, their simple gravity, their generosity and above all, their goodness, the children will vaguely perceive a reflection of the Father's glory ; when later on they are told about God, He will not be altogether unknown to them. Soon they will be accustomed to prayer, the parents associating them with their own. Finally, when the time comes, God will be explicitly spoken of to them : in the setting of a starry night or a mountainous countryside, the power and beauty of the Lord will be evoked ; in the context of affectivity which causes each child to be known and loved, the mother will say that there is Someone Who loves and knows him more than she can ; before the tabernacle, in the quiet of a church or chapel, she will say that Jesus is present...

In fact, when the sense of the invisible God has been thoroughly awakened, Jesus Christ can be further spoken of. No doubt, He has

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<sup>1</sup> Cf. an article by M. and J. DEFOSSA, *The Ceremony of Preparation for Baptism*, in *Lumen Vitae*, Vol. IX, 1954, No. 1.

already been mentioned some time before, the crucifix, pictures and statues have been shown, but He has only been spoken of discreetly, for the explicit knowledge of Jesus, God and Man, Who was born, lived and died for us and lives today among us, is only possible if God is already known.<sup>1</sup> The humanity of Jesus will first be insisted upon ; He was an infant like us, then grew into a man ; He was sent by God so that we might know and love our Father in Heaven ; so that we may be welcomed by Him in His Paradise. That Child and that Man was the Son of God, God Himself ; He died to deliver us from sin ; but He is risen and lives in Heaven ; He comes near to us at Mass, at Communion and in the Tabernacle. All later religious teaching and especially the catechesis of the Mass, will develop these first rudiments.

It is often thought better not to tell children about the Holy Ghost. It is considered too difficult or too much above them. So, instead of speaking of the Holy Ghost, it is the Angel Guardian who is talked of in a very infantile manner, as protecting the little child and saving him from falling. The Christian message is thus amputated of an essential part. When the child has been led to the knowledge of the existence of Father and Son he will without difficulty be taught to know of the Spirit Who is in him. He will therefore be told of God, the Spirit of God Who lives in our hearts ; of God, the Holy Ghost Who knows us, loves, advises us, guides us and asks us to make Him known and loved. In this way will be laid the bases of a spiritual progress founded on docility to the voice of God in us and fidelity to follow His appeals.

b) *The Catechesis of Confirmation, the Eucharist and Penance.* — The first allusions and first notions on the subject of Jesus Christ and the Holy Ghost will be the beginnings of a more developed catechesis concerning Confirmation, the Eucharist and Penance. This triple catechesis should have been conducted to an already advanced stage at the time of the religious feast at 7 years old — the time of the First Communion, called ‘ Private ’ — . We have written elsewhere<sup>2</sup> of what this catechesis can be. Here we will merely recall it.

The catechesis of Confirmation will be centred on the Holy Ghost,

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<sup>1</sup> Let us recall the need of a *Presence* of Jesus Christ in the persons of the child's parents, of which he should be aware.

<sup>2</sup> On the Catechesis of the Mass, see our article in this number. On that of Confirmation, see particularly, the review *Catéchistes, Confirmation et formation chrétienne*, No. 19, 1st quarter, 1954, pp. 169 to 182.



the interior Master of each soul and of the Church's growth. It will be said that this Sacrament gives the Holy Ghost, that is to say, puts the Christian under His influence and makes of him a disciple ; it will also be said that Confirmation imposes a responsibility with regard to our neighbour, because the Spirit confers a mission of testimony and apostolic radiation in the Church ; finally, it will be said that this coming of the Spirit makes the Christian a new being, shining with the light which is in him and that, consequently, the confirmed child has no longer the right to follow his own caprices and to live for himself.

The Eucharistic catechesis will centre on Jesus Christ, our Saviour, crucified formerly and eternally glorious, in Whose death we find life. We shall insist also on the glorious and penitential aspects of the Mass : Christ collects the communicants, and in transforming them to His likeness, He already inaugurates the splendour of the Kingdom of God on earth. Christ, however, has passed through death to enter into Heaven and to merit it for us ; the Mass which represents and recalls this death associates the faithful with it and in their turn they have to follow the same itinerary as their Lord.

The catechesis of Penance presupposes that the child has the " sense of God " and of " vocation. " Indeed, the " sense of sin " will be awakened in proportion as the child will have felt the holiness of God and his own backwardness (or temptations to backwardness) in responding to His call. Also note that the refusal of love on the part of the child does not take the humanly visible (and often monstrous) proportions as with the adult. But, under capriciousness and apparent futilities, the choice of a freedom which prefers himself to God can already be discerned. The young Christian must therefore be helped to acquire that finesse of soul by which he will perceive and weigh at their just value his reticences and hesitations in abandoning himself to God. The temptation of many catechists is to try to simplify things by giving an exaggerated importance to examens of conscience previously laid down, with a choice of sins duly catalogued and so to speak " prefabricated, " taken more from the Mosaic law than from the Gospel law of Jesus. It is more necessary to arouse the child to look inwardly on his own infidelities, which are often hard to express clearly, to lead him to contrast his own behaviour with the ideal proposed by Jesus in the Gospel<sup>1</sup> and, with the inner inspiration which is

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<sup>1</sup> In this direction, such books as the *Imitation du petit Jésus*, by J. PLAQUEVENT (Ed. du Seuil) are very useful.

the normal guide of every Christian, make him measure the distance between the suggestions of the Holy Ghost and his capriciousness.

*Conclusion.* — The conviction which has guided us and which we desire to share with catechists, is the need to associate catechesis with Christian initiation. That consists in never explaining a truth before it has become or is on the point of becoming, part of the child's *inner* life by an advent and gift of the Lord. For God manifests Himself by giving Himself and the task of catechists is to throw as much light as they can on what God is accomplishing in this way in the secret soul.

This necessity is particularly urgent during infancy. It is indeed needful that the first clear religious knowledge should not be lost amid illusions. Before formulations, a practical grasp of the supernatural reality should have intervened. This grasp is only the manifestation, obscure on the plane of consciousness and by the gift of faith, of the interior transfiguration which the Sacraments of Baptism, Penance, Confirmation and the Eucharist, will accomplish. To separate the sacramental interventions of God from the instruction which corresponds to them, would be equivalent to explaining to a child what parents are without referring to the affection which his own parents have for him. We should therefore develop at the same time the children's piety and their "knowledge" of the things of God. Helping them to live as baptized persons, penitents, confirmed and communicants.

During adolescence, the same exigencies occur. The Eucharistic celebrations above all will be the centre of piety, life and instruction. There is obviously no question of repeating continually the same commentary in the classroom and chapel, but of allowing, through the quality of the liturgical services and the thoroughness of the teaching, the same religious reality which appears, present and working, in the Mass, to become manifest and intelligible to a certain degree in the classroom.

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# The Symbolic Function

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## I. IN GENERAL PSYCHOLOGY

### *Notion.*

By symbolic function, in its broadest sense, we mean a capacity for active liaison between a material sign and a spiritual meaning.

The symbolic function is typically human. Animals do not possess it, although they are perfectly able to react to a signal (the ringing of a bell causes a movement towards proffered food) and to take one object as substitute for another (tokens of a particular colour are chosen in order to obtain a particular food). We must therefore, before going any further, distinguish between signal, sign and symbol. Smoke may for a troop of wild animals be a *signal* (of fire) which causes flight ; smoke will for man be the *sign* (the signal-image) of fire ; finally, smoke, will form the *symbol* of a vain, obscure or sterile undertaking (the glory and smoke of Italy — the smoke of pride). Only in this last case is there any relationship between a material sign and a spiritual meaning.

This relationship is not entirely artificial ; every object does not lend itself equally to symbolize anything : the present of a cake may symbolize participation in the joy of an anniversary, but the present of bread and butter or cheese will eventually be only a tangible sign of affection or a desire to help someone in want ; it is not the symbol of it.

### *Variety.*

Understood as a fundamental process in the life of the spirit, the symbolic function manifests itself in a great variety of ways, from scientific symbolism (“ a mediation thanks to which the

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human mind enters into relationship with material reality without having direct intuition of it and without being able to grasp everything that it is ") <sup>1</sup> to liturgical symbolism (the dramatic representation of a religious mystery and an efficacious act in which divine grace encounters man's liberty). A plastic symbolism projected into things, a vocal and linguistic symbolism, a mystical symbolism : all three existing since the magdalenian civilization of the ancient quaternary. <sup>2</sup> Symbolism of the imagination and of affective life (myths, with or without real foundation), symbolism of bodily behaviour (gestures), of ceremonies (rites) and of objects (clothes, buildings, works of art...) whenever they express an intention and a meaning.

Language is obviously a typical expression of fundamental functional symbolism. The simple exchange of words is based on this function which here finds a use socialized to a high degree.

At the other extremity of symbolical acts, we should, on the contrary, find actions in which invention predominates, the personal creation of a new and original symbol, to express a spiritual trait. This may be a little special gesture which has no meaning except for its author, or perhaps for a friend. It can also be the admirable symbolism, eventually hidden, of a whole existence consecrated to the realization of a value : the slave of truth, the judge by whom one would wish to be judged, the hero of obedience — these modes of life express the ideal of " consecrated " persons, whose existence throughout the years symbolizes the spiritual values and even prefigures the divine mystery.

Between these two extremes, the symbolic function is displayed in a very varied series of acts which are more or less free and, seen from without, more or less ambiguous. <sup>3</sup> A blushing face is a sign with an ambiguous meaning : strain, shame, modesty, fatigue... ;

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<sup>1</sup> Scientific schemas are more than operative signs. See on this subject the penetrating study by Fr. Dominique DUBARLE, O. P., *Symbolisme scientifique et symbolisme liturgique*, in *La Maison-Dieu*, 1950, no. 22, from which we take this definition.

<sup>2</sup> PRADINES, *Traité de psychologie, II. Les œuvres du génie humain*, p. 9. Paris, Presses Univ. de France, 1916.

<sup>3</sup> According to Professor Igor CARUSO, it is in the nature of the symbol to be ambivalent, at once opacity and transparence, the instrument of truth and of error. Ambivalence would also be the characteristic of all human existence. See *Personalistic Psychoanalysis as Symbolic Knowledge in Journal of Psychotherapy as a Religious Process* (Dayton, Ohio), January 1955, p. 15. We think his remarks correct and profound, as long as a word (emanating from the subject or from his 'revealer') has not dispersed the ambiguity and ensured the meaning of the material sign. This "revealing word" is essential as much for therapeutic action as for pastoral.



the deferential and formal attitudes of a congregation passively assisting at late Masses is a sign with an ambiguous meaning : boredom, obedience, prayer... Even the sum total of exterior behaviour in exemplary lives, of which we have spoken above, only constitutes an ambiguous symbol : a narcissistic effort to fulfil oneself in a stoical way, or an authentic testimony to an openness towards values... In certain cases, speech may disperse doubt and determine the meaning of the symbol. Miracles are also ambiguous, as was the visible personality of Jesus Christ, as are liturgical rites : the word of God in man's heart, reveals the meaning and confers their significant power to material signs.

*Double Level.*

Man is able to exercise the symbolic function at two levels :

1) by conscious activity, in the form of aptitude to express a spiritual attitude by a material action (respectful obedience in a genuflection) or by perceiving a spiritual significance in an object or in behaviour (joy in flowers, love in a smile).

2) by an unpremeditated manifestation, emanating from the unconscious personality (whether it is a case of reflexes, instincts or acquired affective structures), in the form of behaviour the meaning of which requires to be replaced in a larger segment of individual history and social context before it can be understood. In psycho-somatic medicine an eczema (physiological behaviour) can be interpreted as being the diversion to the body of a burst of psychic aggressiveness. In psychotherapy, the nocturnal terror of a nightmare concerning threatening animals may express a fear, the original object of which is plunged in oblivion. In social psychology, a virulent explosion of anti-semitic prejudice may signify a collective reaction of insecurity and defence.

These two levels of symbolic expression are closely linked and complementary to one another. The symbolic function is always exercised by an encounter between an interior urge, which results from the whole organization of a personality, and its actualization in exterior expressions of which most (but not all) are modelled by the surrounding culture, traditions and social conventions.

The symbolic act therefore unites, not only several degrees of reality (matter and spirit), but several levels of human reality (conscious and unconscious, individual and social).

The influence of society is obviously very tangible on the sym-

bolic forms of expression, but it is also exerted on the interior needs and urges which result from the psychic acquisitions elaborated from earliest infancy. The exterior forms of symbolism, which are often considered as social, should not be placed in opposition to the interior inclinations towards such or such a symbolization, which would be considered as biological and individual. In reality, the development of the surrounding culture has also its influence on the affective inner tendencies of individuals.

The religious historian will, for instance, note the indefinite variety of material elements susceptible of becoming the site of a symbolical manifestation of the sacred (hierophanies) or the very large area of dispersion of the symbolism of water, the moon or the sky.<sup>1</sup> But the tendency to actualize a need for purification in connection with water (while elsewhere this tendency will be actualized in a symbolism of fire) depends also on an acquired development, individual *and* social, by our original potentialities.

As a matter of fact, the symbolic function is preeminently communal, not merely in its expressions, socially defined, but in its inclinations culturally structured. Even the artist — of whom we shall soon say that he can inflect his symbolical “creations” towards subjectivism of expression — receives a culture from which he nourishes himself (even when he fights against it) and only addresses his symbolical message to others by the intermediary of this same culture.

### *Genesis and Early Functioning.*

In a book which has become a classic,<sup>2</sup> Professor Jean PIAGET has studied the formation of early symbols in childhood. He has shown that the mechanisms, the beginning and exercise of which follow genetic laws, are the same for unconscious symbolism (of affective assimilation) and for conceptual thought.

At behaviour level, beginnings of symbolical substitution exist when a child, deprived of the maternal breast, sets to work to suck his thumb. But it is in the *games of fiction* that we find the most important manifestations of primary or secondary symbolism.

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<sup>1</sup> Cf. Mircea ELIADE, *Traité d'Histoire des Religions*, Paris, Payot, 1953. In the conclusion of another work, *Images et symboles*, Paris, Gallimard, 1952, the same author emphasizes that it is thanks to symbols and archetypes that cultures remain ‘open’ to a trans-historic world. To them also he attributes the mediaeval action of Judeo-Christian symbolism, while remaining very non-committal on its immediate chances of planetary extension.

<sup>2</sup> Jean PIAGET, *La formation du symbole chez l'enfant*, Neuchâtel, Delachaux, 1945.

In most cases, the assimilation of one object to another is conscious. When J., at one year and 10 months, makes a cat walking on a wall out of a seashell on a box, he is perfectly aware of the meaning of this symbol, for he says : " cat on the wall " (p. 181). He uses it to play with.

But one often observes that symbols exist in the game the significance of which is not understood by the subject. For instance, P., jealous of a little brother, when playing with two dolls of unequal size, sends the small one on a long journey while the larger one remains with the mother (same age, p. 181). This unconscious interiorised symbolism is called secondary by Piaget. But all the intermediaries exist and " it must be understood that the symbols themselves cannot be finally separated into primary and secondary " (p. 183). Piaget studies three groups of symbols which are usually of the secondary type, because they contain more than the child is conscious of : symbols which have a bearing on interests connected with his own body (suction and excretion) those which touch on elementary family sentiments (love, jealousy and aggressiveness), and those which are concerned with a preoccupation with the birth of babies. Observation shows that when these interests occur in the symbols of a game, the child shows a slight degree of excitement (meaning laughs, etc.) or sometimes a dislike of being overheard (pp. 183-187). From two to five years, the structure of the unconscious commences around the symbols which have the most direct bearing on relatively permanent affective schemes. The assimilation (to the subject) foreshadows the adaptation (to reality).

In the other direction — that of the primary symbolism of conscious fiction games — Piaget distinguishes a stage (two to four years) of symbolic projection on objects having a value of compensation or liquidation for emotions or actions linked with the subject (the child makes a doll do things which his parents have forbidden him to do), and a stage (four to seven) in which the symbol gradually loses its character of fictional distortion and approaches the imitation of reality (playing at shops, at telephoning). It is also *between four and seven* that we find the *beginning of collective symbolism* properly so-called, with differentiation and adjustment of roles. After seven or eight years, there is a decline in symbolism in favour of games with definite rules or with greater approximation to the imitation of continuous and suitable work (pp. 129-149). Rite prevails over liturgy.

According to Dr. André SOULAIRAC,<sup>1</sup> it is only about the sixth year that the possibility of the *active* utilization of the symbol as such occurs. Certainly, the child has a symbolic activity long before the age of six. But it may be asked whether he then does anything besides utilizing signals or signal-images. In order to use symbols

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<sup>1</sup> A. SOULAIRAC, *Les limites de l'acte infra-humain*, in *Limites de l'Humain* (Études Carmélitaines, Paris, Desclée de Brouwer, 1953). The sequel to this exposition will appear in a forthcoming volume of Études Carmélitaines devoted to symbolism (congrès d'Avon, September 1954).

actively, it is necessary, according to Dr. Soulairac, to display "diffuse cortical activity, with a system of specific projections." Symbols come to life in the child, passively, through the continuity between his neuro-psychic activities and his life in relation to surroundings and people; but he is then passive to these "symbols" and does not yet confer upon them an intentionally significant meaning.

It would therefore seem that, towards six years old, the requisite conditions for the display of collective symbolism, actively assumed, may occur. The intervention of magic and animistic thought at this age brings with it a real danger in the assimilation of religious symbolism (we will deal with this later), and also the tendency in the following years (seven to twelve) to lay great stress on ritualistic and stereotyped gestures: an obvious impoverishment of the affective meaning of the symbols by the intellectualism of abstract signs and fixed rules.

#### *Neuroses-Psychoses.*

The symbolic function, as we have shown, is at the base of the knowledge which man acquires of himself and the most delicate action which he exerts on others. This knowledge and this action, not being intuitive and direct, are effected by means of analogy and symbols.

As Madame DOLTO wrote so profoundly: "To know oneself to be human, one must know oneself *dependent* on sensorial conditions and *free* in symbolic relationships." <sup>1</sup>

When treating neurotic subjects in whom freedom is impeded, or no longer plays a part, the psychotherapist makes use of an elementary symbolic function: contact is established on the level of unconscious symbolism (for instance, the therapist's voice recalls that of the father which has hindered the correct development of the sick person in his infancy) and gradually restores the possibility of an actual and healthy relationship with the therapist, based on a conscious and freely assumed symbolism.

Mental pathology in psychoses indicates a more total derangement of the symbolic function. Either the consciousness is abandoned to the anarchical irruption of emotive images (hysterical cases) or to verbal symbols (cases of schizophrenia), without being able to integrate their meaning; or else the consciousness is a prey

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<sup>1</sup> Dr. Françoise DOLTO, *Acquisition de l'autonomie*, in *Limites de l'humain*, *op. cit.*, p. 137.



to anxiety to which it tends to respond by a conceptual system (cases of obsession) in which pseudo-symbols, abstractions, hinder authentic contact with reality. In all cases, the symbolic function is destroyed.

The religious content of certain psychoses and the way in which it is connected with the symbolic function about to be destroyed, would deserve to be studied with greater attention by religious psychology.

This study would throw light on the fundamental articulations of the psychism of children and primitives. This working hypothesis might be admitted (a missionary has lately communicated it to us) : <sup>1</sup> that in psychoses, the rapid dissolution of magical ideas and the relative permanence of traces of a personal religion would testify to the depth and psychological superiority of the latter. It has been often remarked that nevropaths of primitive mentality continue to be attached to Catholic worship and the persons representing it, without fetichism, which one would imagine to be linked with a more archaic and deeper layer of their affective personality, showing any notable resurgence, although such is frequently the case among normal persons.

### *Finality.*

The achievement of the symbolic function needs, we think, to be exercised in an inter-personal relationship. The result of subjectivity, structured by the cultural community, the link between the material sign and the spiritual meaning finds its greatest manifestation in the communion of persons. A handshake, the significance of which may depend on a culture, takes a plenary meaning in the contract uniting two wills. The kiss or embrace, the origin of which does not escape a biological conditioning, finds the fullness of its meaning in the promise of everlasting fidelity.

We do not hope that all will agree with us on this point. The symbolic function, too often confused with its aesthetic usage, is understood and lived by many as self-expression (which it is), rather than as a manifestation of union with others (which, in our opinion, it needs to become to effect its true end). Hence the chief employment, quite legitimately, of the symbolic function in art and its insertion in the sense of art for art's sake : the novel as the admirable expression of the personality of the writer — the picture as the manifestation of a way in which the world appears to the

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<sup>1</sup> We owe this interesting remark to Father Pierre Swartenbroeckx, S. J., Superior of the Kikwit Mission. It refers to Bayansi nevropaths (Belgian Congo) among whom magical practices and fetichism coexist with Catholic beliefs.

artist — dancing and music as the projection of spiritual attitudes inexpressible by other means.

Will the symbolic function enter finally into play as self-expression, or as the instrument of union ? A problem of finality which none of us escapes and which confronts us, though perhaps unconsciously, with fundamental options.

By way of an invitation to share our point of view, we will confine ourselves to the mention of a psychiatric incidence : if the symbolic function ends by tending to be the expression of personal subjectivity, there is no longer any difference in value between the drawing of a schizophrenic and the masterpiece of the artist. The poetry of the delirious is exactly equivalent to the sonnet of the great poet : each is the successful expression of the author's personality. Some will seek for the mark of genius in the amount of universality contained in the work of art : so be it, but it is still not certain that some schizophrenic works would not come up to standard...

If the human tendency to incarnate values is not a chimera or a dream, the symbolic function must have its final aim, which is inter-personal communion, restored.

## II. IN RELIGIOUS PSYCHOLOGY

### *Necessity.*

The religious use of the symbolic function confronts us with its most elevated, but also most delicate, exercise, closest to the deviations and contaminations to which we have alluded. Hence the distrust of psychologists and psychiatrists, materialist or spiritualist, with regard to many ambiguous manifestations of religious life. The latter can, however, never do without symbols, or it would constantly touch upon an ambiguity which is no doubt linked to the earthly conditions under which faith is exercised.

When it is a question of God and our relations with Him, the symbolic function is required to serve a different purpose. God and the mystery of our salvation are above representations in exact form, above all concept and all intuition. The Divine Being and the mysteries of redemption can only be signified by analogy, perceived behind the sensible signs and lived in symbol. The mysteries of salvation necessarily depend upon the symbolic function, which thus finds its achievement by becoming a liturgical function.

If the interpretation of symbolism is necessary here, it is no

longer — as in the neurotic — because the real object, fled from or distrusted, is rejected into the unconscious,<sup>1</sup> but because, being loved, desired, it is above all images, because, being served, it is in faith and hope, and because, having become Word, it asks recognition, not only as the token of a thought but as the symbol of a presence.

### *Re-presentation of Mysteries.*

This presence of the mysteries of salvation had come through several stages, of which a theologian, also a pedagogue,<sup>2</sup> has sketched the general plan.

1) In the Old Covenant (but not confined to it), the presence of salvation is realized *figuratively*, in outline, in 'images' or 'types.' God delivers His people from the Egyptian captivity and causes them to pass through the Red Sea: a historical fact and a material sign, but also the symbol of religious liberation.

2) This first stage is followed by the *full realization* in Jesus Christ, complete, but historically localized, without the open and triumphant manifestation which is reserved for Parousia. Paschal mystery: the passage of Christ through death, due to sin, and the resurrection in which the whole creation shares. Foundation of all historical symbolism, which was its preparation, and of all liturgical symbolism, which is its prolongation and efficient application.

3) In the period of the Church (between the Ascension and the Second Coming of the Lord), the mysteries of salvation are realized in a new stage which is *sacramental*. Baptism, the death of the 'old man,' is again both a passage and a resurrection: a sacramental sign, efficient and the symbolic re-presentation of the mystery.

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<sup>1</sup> For Freud, who discovered the laws of symbolic transposition (condensation, displacement, poly-determination), symbolism is chiefly a travesty. It disguises what it hides under a psychic urge, called 'censure.' Later, perhaps under the influence of Jung, Freud saw in symbolism, not only a disguise, but a primitive and archaic language. Piaget (*Op. cit.*, p. 203) blames Freud for having neglected the conscious awareness which emanates positively from the symbol. At the centre of the repression there are forces which also seek for some actuation by man, and the symbol partially reveals them. It is naturally in this manner that we must advance in order to throw light upon the positive meaning of religious symbolism, while being careful not to confuse (as Jung's disciples too frequently do) the plane of psychic mechanisms with that of freely assumed symbolisms. On the subject of the serious gaps, both theoretical and practical, in Jung's position, it is profitable to read the recent study by Raymond HOSTIE, *Du mythe à la Religion* (Études Carmélitaines, Paris, Desclée De Brouwer, 1955).

<sup>2</sup> Henri OSTER, *Le Dessin de Dieu*, fiche no. 180 in *Vérité et Vie*, série XX (Strasbourg, 1953-1954).

The lives of the Saints, the great stages in the life of the Church (the martyrdom of certain Christian communities — the form of its struggles, of its reforms in times of decadence) constitute in their turn an added symbolism of balance, the role of which is often neglected.

4) The *definitive and open achievement* of salvation will take place at the end of time, when all things will have been reunited in Christ, and this recapitulation will be lived, no longer in faith and symbols, but in direct vision and communion, by the whole of humanity.

This is not the place to treat in detail of the comprehension and pedagogic value which “ the theology of the Mysteries ” brings to sacramental liturgy. Recently, a good exposition of the doctrine and the controversy <sup>1</sup> has shown that the mystery of worship is, in any hypothesis, “ a sacred act, a symbolical activity ” (p. 69) and that “ the saving actions become present in it as a deed which is operative ” (p. 70). A symbolical and efficient presence which presents religious psychology and pedagogy with the most redoubtable of problems.

### *Pedagogic Pitfalls.*

The liturgy — the dramatic imagery of the religious mysteries, the collection of gestures and rites in which divine grace encounters man's liberty — constitutes a delicate use of the symbolic function. In liturgical practices the divine presence, the terminal pole of the symbolic action, is not met in a direct affective experience (outside mystical states) ; it is exercised in the obscure practice of the theological virtues. Our attitudes of adoration, gratitude, faith, or hope are projected and expressed in the ritual gestures, the formulae of vocal prayer, pre-arranged communal participation, without the Divine Persons, to whom the believer unites himself, themselves reacting by an analogous symbolic movement. It is true that the Divine initiative has already forestalled us : it is continually meeting us in the sacramental liturgy, that collection of material objects and actions which are both symbolic and efficient of God's gift. We must also go further and say that it is because they cannot in any way emanate from man that the forms of liturgical and sacramental worship are necessary for the baptized, who can only discover them and put them in practice in an act of love and grateful submission. The absence of individual creation in the liturgical action is in itself symbolic of the absolute priority of the

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<sup>1</sup> Théodore FILTHAUT, *La Théologie des Mystères* (French translation, Paris and Tournai, Desclée, 1954).



Divine (or ecclesiastical) initiative with regard to the selected signs. That is why an abuse of the para-liturgies would result in an anthropocentrism which might depart from the deepest spiritual attitudes.

We cannot, however, forbear to mention the danger of liturgical symbolism ending in stereotyped ritual (even when performed in community) with a desiccating effect on the interior life, the individuals (not to speak of the communities) confronting themselves only, thrown back on exterior observances, and the symbolic function being turned away from that inter-personal openness which we have pointed out as being its true achievement in normal psychology. We feel bound to draw attention to the difficulties inherent in liturgical symbolism when employed by the believer and, still more, in its transmission to children ?...

There are two pitfalls lying in wait for liturgical pedagogy which might cause the wreck of the symbolic function itself: the materialization of the meaning of the sign, and its abstraction. In the first case, the meaning would be identified with its material substratum ; in the second, the material sign becomes too schematic and emptied of its human significance.

1) The first corruption of religious symbolism would consist in attaching too much importance to the material substratum, to the sensible sign in itself. Prayer, for instance, becomes set in the formula to which the whole of its efficiency is attributed. With regard to sacramental matter, the *ex opere operato* is separated from the *ex opere operantis*, the divine sign from its employment by human activity. The material reception is supposed to produce its spiritual fruits almost automatically, whereas the latter — as we know — require the conscious and active union of Christian prayer and life (without there being any proportion between this prayer and the fruits of grace). To sum up, the sacrament is reduced to a rite which operates by magic. The divine action is captured and bent to our service. This deviation is not possible except by separating the sign and symbol in sacramental catechesis, by isolating the sacramental matter from its form employed dynamically in its liturgical context.

In the sacramental liturgy, as Fr. Roguet has well expressed it : “ The sign is to the symbol what the point is to the pyramid : the sign is the extreme point of the symbol... the *sacramental sign* is not speculative, but practical, it is an activity (by that, the sacraments are efficacious signs). It is the extreme point of the symbolism of each sacrament which (replaced in its liturgical context)

is a *symbol* full of mystery. ”<sup>1</sup> Therefore, all education in liturgical life is much more an initiation than an intellectual instruction.

Sacramental and liturgical initiation can never go against the general principle of religious pedagogy, so well laid down by the Abbé Barbey : “ All progress in the sense of God should bear both on the acceptance of His reality and on His transcendence over the sphere of visible things. ”<sup>2</sup> This antinomy is the exact result of the symbolic function correctly exercised.

2) A second contamination of liturgical symbolism would be an intensification of its schematization. E. Rhode has found an allegorical rationalization of this type of Homer's religion, soon compensated for by the astonishing success of mystery religions. <sup>3</sup> In this domain we may recall the classical example of the degradation of symbols in the Middle Ages, which provoked the reaction of certain “ spiritually-minded ” persons against the use of images in mystical vocabulary. <sup>4</sup>

It may be a matter of the esoterism, of rites, formulae and ideas : an impoverishment of the sign which is foreign to daily life (some decorative motifs are no longer intelligible outside a decadent archaeology : prostrating before a triangle) — the reduction of gestures to conventionalism (the tips of the fingers are touched, with no water in the stoup) — a corruption of the sign by an aberrational secondary ‘ practical ’ meaning (ecclesiastics were given aseptic syringes, similar to fountain pens, which can be carried in the pocket for the administration of blessings, or urgent baptisms).

Man, being culturally flexible, lends himself to a certain point to these deviations and misuse of primitive symbols. Moreover, a certain esoterism contributes remarkably to *bind together* the adepts who share their use. It remains a question to what extent it contributes to bind them to God...

That is the point upon which we wish to insist : the symbolic function, even in its religious use, is always *the encounter between an interior virtual symbolism and a communal representation*. This exterior aspect is an instrument : it aims at realizing the union of man

<sup>1</sup> A.-M. ROGUET, O. P., *Les Sacrements*, Somme Théologique de S. Thomas, trans. by the Revue des Jeunes (Paris, Tournai, Desclée, 1945), Appendix II, pp. 314 and 321-325.

<sup>2</sup> Léon BARBEY, *L'éducation du sens de Dieu chez l'enfant*, in *Lumen Vitae*, VII (1952), no. 3, p. 422.

<sup>3</sup> Erwin RHODE, *Psyché : le culte de l'âme chez les Grecs*, Paris, 1928.

<sup>4</sup> G. MOREL, S. J., *La nature du symbole*, in *La Maison-Dieu*, Paris, Ed. du Cerf, no. 42, 1955, p. 102.

with the mysterious modes of Divine presence. When the rites of a cult or a liturgy are no longer susceptible of effecting this encounter with the affective life of men, they remain sometimes capable of linking the faithful to each other — they thus represent a considerable force of cohesion — but they miss a connection with the personal, human and religious drama, and they no longer arrive at placing the affective powers of man in the best disposition for grace to operate and conform them to the image of Christ. Thus disfigured, they may remain as social customs ; they will have ceased to be religious practices.

*The Psycho-Pedagogic Problem.*

It may happen that religious pedagogy sets the psychologist questions to answer as to the predispositions of liturgical symbols of different ages : what is the amount of aptitude for the liturgy in proportion to age ?

It can now be understood that this question — apart from the fundamental mechanisms of the symbolic function of which we have spoken — cannot receive a general answer, at least if it applies to a participation in the liturgical symbolism which is *religious* properly so-called. Liturgical symbolism, in fact, only acquires its full religious value in an encounter between the latent and interior symbolism of each individual and the ceremonies in which he participates.

At about the fifth or sixth year, a normal child has sufficient understanding, on the plane of functional mechanisms, for the idea of God, or the use of holy water, or the ceremonies of the offertory and communion, to take on the value of religious *signs*. But his personal history may soon make him sensible of the importance of an omniscient and good Being, or the symbolical value of ritual purifications, or the humano-divine meaning of the offering and the death-resurrection (of which the Mass renews the presence) so that these signs take on for him their full value and become living, active and operative symbols, in his most profound psychological life. On the contrary, the history of another child may have the effect (at least temporarily) of making him shudder at the presence of God (" God can kill me at any moment, " said a very worried little girl of nine), or an obsession with purifications and rites of ablution (in the atmosphere of a magical mentality), or a dislike of passive assistance at sacrificial gestures (where alone, perhaps, the meaning of obedience to the Church still exists)...

All attempts at studying or interpreting the symbolic expressions

without taking into account their two dimensions (the cultural sense of the symbolic manifestation *and* the personal significance, conscious and unconscious, of the subject who assumes it) would be beside the point. The cult of Our Lady, even limited to its practice in Catholicism is always the meeting-place of positive, historical and mystical facts, of which the Christian community keeps alive the value, and of a subjective affectivity comprising an interior, virtual, more or less conscious, image (which, according to persons, will be that of the girl, the mother, the woman collaborating in the Divine purpose, etc.).<sup>1</sup>

There is therefore no general recipe for applying the psychology of religious symbolism in pedagogy. There is no alignment of symbols which would follow meekly the curve of bio-psychological maturation in childhood and adolescence. There is the encounter, otherwise personal and profound, between affective trends and structures — variously conditioned by the social context and development of each human life — and signs by which the Divine initiative offers itself to our adoration and love in the Church and in historically constituted communities. The religious symbol is only exercised in this junction between a symbolic function which is virtual and interior, sometimes barely reflected upon, and the exterior signs of the great symbols of the Bible, the Liturgy and the very life of the Church.

When this encounter exists, the religious symbols are no longer merely objects of thought, occasions of grace or signs of submission, but they effect the mysteriously transforming conjunction by which is achieved the supreme finality of the symbolic function : to ensure the living union of persons between each other and of each with God.

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<sup>1</sup> Essential remarks and principles for the correct articulation of the transcendent meaning and human affectivity in religious symbolism, have been enunciated by L. BEIRNAERT, S. J., *Psychanalyse et symbolisme religieux*, in *Cahiers Laënnec*, 1948, no. 2, pp. 42-50 ; *Symbolisme mythique de l'eau dans le baptême*, in *La Maison-Dieu*, 1950, no. 22, pp. 94-120 ; *Le symbolisme ascensionnel dans la liturgie et la mystique chrétiennes*, in *Eranos-Jahrbuch*, XIX, 1951, pp. 41-63, Zurich, Rhein Verlag.

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# Contemporary Reactions to Confession

by Pierre BLANCHARD

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"You will come to know the truth and the truth will set you free." (St. John, VIII, 32).

"Such is the freedom Christ has won for us. Stand fast, and do not let yourselves be caught again in the yoke of slavery."

(St. Paul, Galatians, IV, 31 ; V, 1).

"Freedom for captive souls!" (P. CLAUDEL, *Le Soulier de Satin*, Finale).

We go less frequently to confession and seek the Sacrament of Penance with greater difficulty. The motives for which we put off or omit this religious act are no longer exactly the same as before. Some have to do with the form of confession, others are inspired by some dominant ideas of modern psychology. If we observe the behaviour of the pupils in our religious boarding schools, what do we find? In the lower forms, up to twelve, the children go freely

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to confession, often, whenever they are invited to do so. During the holidays, these same children who, during the school year, approach the Sacrament every fortnight, will go once or twice, for the Feast of the Assumption. Here is a pointer. Was it a personal affair, the significance of which was understood, that it can be so quickly dropped when the surroundings and circumstances change? It is not inapposite to quote a page of Anatole France :

“ Every Saturday we were taken to confession. If anyone can tell me why, I should be glad. This practice inspired me with a great respect and with boredom. I do not think that the chaplain took a real interest in hearing my sins ; but it was certainly disagreeable to me to tell him of them. The first difficulty was to find them. You will easily believe me when I tell you that at ten years of age I did not possess the psychic qualities and the methods of analysis which would have enabled me to explore my inner conscience in a rational manner. However, sins I must have ; for, no sins, no confession. It is true that I had been given a little book which contained them all. I only had to choose. But even the choice was difficult. There was so much obscure matter concerning theft, simony, prevarication, fornication and concupiscence ! I found in this little book : “ I accuse myself of having despaired. — I accuse myself of having listened to bad conversations. ” That caused me much embarrassment. Which is why I usually confined myself to the chapter on distractions. Distractions during service, distractions during meals, distractions during ‘ meetings,’ I owned to them all and the deplorable emptiness of my conscience shamed me greatly. To have no sin was a humiliation. At last one day, I remembered Fontanet’s cap ; I had found my sin ; I was saved ! ” <sup>1</sup>

In our day, children have at their disposal examens of conscience which are better adapted to their spiritual state. But we still come across states of soul similar to that described by A. France. It is enough to observe the child’s behaviour before entering the confessional and on coming out, to discover the personal quality of the act.

As the pupil draws near to adolescence, passes through it, in the upper forms, confession is much more rare. They continue to go to Communion — at least the girls do. Some display anxiety if they take part in a retreat of which confession is considered an integral part, if not a necessity. Finally, when the move is made, they are either disappointed or satisfied. And life goes on. Daniel Rops in *L’Ame Obscure*, has described these difficult confessions of disturbed adolescence, in a page which possesses permanent truth in a moving analysis :

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<sup>1</sup> A. FRANCE, *Le Livre de mon Ami*, Calmann-Lévy, 38th ed., 1926, pp. 140-1.

"Blaise Orlier was too much a Christian by education and inclination not to fight with all his strength against the perverse suggestions of his imagination. But he felt himself unarmed. He should have gone to find the abbé Van Vries, and told him everything in detail. He would perhaps have known the necessary advice to give. But he had been shy, not known what to do. He went to Frondenex, made his confession to the old parish priest. "How hard it is to tell!" he thought as he went. The old priest's sight was failing; when Blaise accused himself solemnly of having "violated the sixth commandment:" "Are you married?" the priest had asked. "Have you any children?" He had said nothing; he had wanted to laugh. Afterwards came days of anguish when he had implored God to save him, when he had cried on his knees by his bed, holding up his hands to the crucifix. He had prayed, groaned, bitten the sheets, a prey to the despair of a lost child. He clung to his faith with distress, feeling that it was the only defence against the temptations which he had been taught to dread above all, and that, on the day when he gave it up, there would be nothing to protect him any longer. Then little by little this secret drama lost its tragedy. Each defeat seemed to him less painful than the preceding, and the more he grew accustomed to sin, the more he lost the faith, the less he dreamt of asking help from it. Perhaps that faith had only been a form of his secret violence, and now that his ardour had found new objectives, religious sentiments passed into the second place."<sup>1</sup>

It is hardly necessary to mention the fact that after their secondary studies, young people, now completely their own masters, go even less to confession.

We are faced with a double problem of religious psychology, a problem of spiritual formation and of Christian education. Let us try to collect the facts, to gather together the elements. It is difficult to start enquiries in such a delicate matter. Sensational revelations are not to be expected; it is not so much a matter of statistics as of understanding. In psychology, quality counts more than quantity. The answer of one thoughtful subject has more value than twenty replies from superficial minds. The spirit of finesse, of intuition, preserves its rights in face of the mathematical mind. At the end of the enquiries one is inclined, although against one's will, to transform judgments of existence into judgments of value: youth thinks, acts thus, therefore that is the truth, at least their truth, the truth today. Education consists always in understanding, not so that we may approve of everything, but that we may complete, rectify, adapt.

Forty girls in an independent school, during Lent 1954, in the

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<sup>1</sup> DANIEL ROPS, *L'âme obscure*, Plon, 1951, p. 46.

Third, Second and First Grades, from 13 to 18, agreed to answer a questionnaire on confession. The questions were general ones, so that 1) the girls, while giving their own opinions, did not have to give away any of the secrets of their consciences ; 2) the whole problem was covered : circumstances, the actions of the penitent and of the minister of the Sacrament. The pupils were absolutely free to answer or not. The papers were given to the priest without any signature, merely the age of the writer. They took a lively interest in this reflective exercise, understood their instructor's intentions (he was not their confessor). This discreet and limited enquiry was of undeniable efficacy.

The questionnaire was as follows :

- 1) Why do we go to confession ?
- 2) Why do we not go ?
- 3) When should we go to confession ? When is it necessary ? When is it useful ?
- 4) What is most difficult in confession, avowal or contrition ?
- 5) Is the avowal a confidence ? Is confidence a psychological necessity ?
- 6) What are the most difficult faults to confess ? Pride, sensuality, lack of charity ?
- 7) What is most difficult in contrition, regret or the firm purpose ?
- 8) What interior reactions do you have when you always commit the same sins ?
- 9) Do you prefer to make your confession to a priest whom you know or one whom you do not know ? Why ?
- 10) Do you prefer a secular priest (a priest from the parish) or a religious ?
- 11) Do you prefer a young priest or an older one ?
- 12) Is it best always to go to the same confessor ?
- 13) Do you object to being asked questions by the confessor or do you like it ?
- 14) What do you expect of the confessor ?
- 15) Have you heard criticisms and remarks on the subject of confession ?

It must be mentioned that lessons on the Sacrament of Penance had not been given to the pupils in these classes, nor by that instructor, that the pupils went to confession in their own parishes and not in the school, that the mistresses are Christian, but not religious. These three facts are indispensable if we are to realize the intellectual, spiritual and pedagogical atmosphere in which the answers were given.

Rather than examine the answers systematically and exhaustively, we prefer to insert the most significant of them into a constructive analysis of the reactions of conscience before confession,



from two successive points of view, the purely psychological and the spiritual. We will then refer to the testimony of contemporary literature to enter more deeply into the secrets of the soul.

## I. CONFESSION AND PSYCHOLOGY : WHY DO WE NOT GO TO CONFESSION ?

To the question thus put : Why do we not go to confession ? the replies give the most various causes, from which the following emerge :

Negligence and laziness — “ One puts it off, one waits until one has committed a mortal sin. ” (13) <sup>1</sup>

Fear — “ One has not gone to confession for so long ” (13).

Pride — “ One thinks that there is no need of God’s help, one is able to resist temptation alone ” (13).

Fear of troubling the priest — “ I do not dare to go to the presbytery to find the priest ” (16).

Departure of a confessor — “ One got used to a confessor and he has gone away ” (13).

The prospect of new life — “ So as not to have to change our habits ” (15).

“ There are periods of life when one feels the need of remaining at the stage which one has reached without changing one’s way of life ” (17).

Disappointment at past confessions — “ Confession did not have the expected result ” (16).

The obligation of speaking to a man — “ It is very difficult to confess to a man, even a priest, committing the same sins as we do. And that is why there are such lukewarm Christians. If one could make one’s confession directly to God, like the Protestants, one would be more frank and would understand oneself better ” (16).

Let us attempt a classification.

*A. There are causes which spring from the structure of confession and the difficulty of making the essential acts of avowal and contrition.*

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<sup>1</sup> This means a 13 years old girl.

1. *The Avowal.*a) *Which is the most difficult, avowal or contrition ?*

12 : avowal ; 21 : contrition. More detailed answers. Contrition is considered as the most difficult. Very pertinent remarks were made and distinctions drawn.

— “ That depends on the sins : it is harder to have contrition for impurity, harder to confess a sin against charity ” (14).

— “ That depends on the character. For proud persons, the confession is the hardest ; they comfort themselves by thinking that the grille makes them unrecognizable. For contrition, a certain amount of self-mastery is necessary for serious examination, so one confines oneself to regret ” (15).

— “ The confession only takes a moment, the contrition is longer ” (16).

Here, with exact intuition, the distinction is made between an *act* and a spiritual *state* to be acquired and maintained.

— “ Confession is more difficult than imperfect contrition, easier than perfect contrition ” (16).

This reply denotes not only a precise knowledge of the theology of contrition, but a quality of reflection rare enough at that age.

— “ Before the priest, both ; before God, neither one nor the other ” (16).

The most pregnant answer is that in which the respondent does not see how two acts can be disassociated which imply one another in the moral experience of a will to a spiritual renaissance.

— “ The two things are inseparable. One regrets much more easily a fault which one does not confess and I think that contrition helps confession. When one truly regrets a fault, it is more difficult to confess it, but it makes one do so ” (18).

Contrition exists first in the conscience : it causes the avowal. The more the contrition is real, the more horror of the sin is felt, the greater the difficulty of the act, this difficulty is spiritual rather than psychological.

Our first conclusion is that, for the young, the avowal is less difficult than contrition.

b) *Which are the most difficult sins to confess ?*

The replies shed light on the scale and movement of values in the conscience, as to the state of sensibility of the moral conscience with relation to certain obligations. The most difficult sins to confess are : impurity (11 times), pride (6), lying (6), lack of charity (2),

omission of Sunday Mass (1), omission of morning and evening prayers (1). Several introduce shades of meaning which imply a finer psychology. The hardest to confess are :

— The faults most rarely committed :

“ Unusual sin, which is not on the list ” (16).

— Faults against which one has been put on one's guard :

“ My parents have always taught me to be loyal and frank and when I commit one of these sins, it is difficult for me to confess it. When in my form I saw girls cheating in exams, I was horrified ” (13).

— Faults which wound human pride :

“ The faults which one keeps on committing, because it looks like a lack of will power. A much greater act of humility is needed to confess them than for occasional faults ” (18).

— Faults which are vices : Jealousy, egoism.

— Faults which are one's besetting sin :

“ A proud person, his pride ; a lazy person, his laziness ” (16).

— The faults which go against our generous tendencies.

— The faults into which one continually falls :

“ One has the idea that one is lacking in will power. To confess them, a much greater act of humility is required than for occasional faults ” (18).

Pierre Emmanuel, thinking over his adolescence, lets fall this remark :

“ It was far easier for us to confess a sin of lust in the merciful obscurity of the confessional than to seek out the priest in his house to tell him the state of our beliefs. ”<sup>1</sup>

## 2. Contrition.

*What in contrition is most difficult, regret or a firm purpose of amendment ?*

Regret — repentance and a firm purpose are the two complementary aspects of true contrition. They are nevertheless two different psychological acts corresponding to different movements of the conscience.<sup>2</sup> The reaction as a whole was : 28 declared that it is

<sup>1</sup> Pierre EMMANUEL, *L'ouvrier de la onzième heure*, Ed. du Seuil, 1953, p. 136.

<sup>2</sup> We refer the reader to remarkable phenomenological analyses a) on repentance : Max SCHELER, *Le sens de la souffrance*, Aubier, the whole chapter on Repentance and renaissance, pp. 73-135 ; b) on the distinction between regret and remorse,

the firm purpose, 8 repentance, 2 both. Here are some reflections accompanying the replies.

— "One never knows how the situation will present itself" (15).

— "The temptations will persist" (15).

The experience of the past weighs heavily on the conscience and takes away a certain lustre from optimism, if not from hope.

— "Especially when we see that we fall again into the same sin that we have regretted at our last confession" (16).

B. *There are causes which come from previous experiences in confession.* — This experience is double: they have been disappointed by the confessor, and by their own frailty.

### 1. *Disappointment in the Confessor.*

The replies do not positively emphasize this factor as concerns the writers personally, but it is one of the objections which they have heard. We may ask ourselves whether these girls out of delicacy have not preferred this indirect method, typical of feminine psychology and sincerity, to communicate their own impressions for which they do not want to accept the responsibility.

— "He is in too much of a hurry. He cuts out half the confession."

— "The priests are not strict enough. They accept all that one says, and make no remark."

It is obvious that the priest should give the impression that he is devoting his time to souls and not that they are taking it from him, wasting it. "My friend, speak quickly, I am in a hurry," a priest said to a penitent, who immediately answered, "Father, I have finished." Huet, bishop of Avranches, shut himself up to work. When people came to see him, his servants answered: "Monseigneur is working." And his discouraged flock said: "We will ask the king for a bishop who has finished his studies."

We cannot here avoid quoting the story of Paul Claudel's first confession after his conversion. He was 22 (born on the 6th August 1868, converted on the 25th December 1886, he made his confession in December 1889).

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remorse and repentance: V. JANKELEVITCH, *La mauvaise conscience*, Alcan, 1933. We cannot summarize these extremely delicate analyses. It must suffice to recall that repentance is the contrary of remorse and that, if remorse introduces us dangerously into "the morbid universe of sin" (A. Hesnard), on the contrary, repentance opens to us the prospect of renaissance.



" I plucked up my courage and one afternoon I entered a confessional in St. Médard, my parish. The minutes during which I waited for the priest were the most bitter of my life. I found an old man who seemed to me to be very little moved by a story which appeared so interesting to me ; he spoke to me of " memories of my first communion " (to my profound vexation), and ordered me before absolution to declare my conversion to my family : for which today I cannot blame him. I went out of the box humiliated and chagrined and did not return until the following year, when I was really driven to it, at the end of my tether. There, in that same church of St. Médard, I found a merciful priest who reconciled me and later, the holy and venerable ecclesiastic, the abbé Villaume, who became my director and my beloved father in God, and on whose protection from Heaven I never cease to rely. I made a second communion on that same day of Christmas, the 25th December 1890 at Notre-Dame. " <sup>1</sup>

## 2. *The Same Sins Again.*

The question was : What inner reactions do you have when you continually commit the same sins ?

The reactions are negative or positive.

*Negative reactions*, of discouragement (16), disgust, humiliation ; feeling of powerlessness ; one loses all reaction (18) ; one gets used to sinning ; one stops going to confession ; one loses confidence in God.

" One loses assurance, trust in God's help " (15).

*Positive reactions*, 3 answer that one realizes one's weakness and absolute need of God ; 3 state that the efforts and resistance have been insufficient ; gratitude for the love of God Who always forgives ; 5 conclude that they realize clearly the fault which has to be fought against. From all these replies, a reflection emerges which is of a nature to give back hope to the most discouraged.

" I console myself by saying that I still have a lot to do. For there is nothing which irritates me more than when I think myself good, charitable, almost perfect " (17).

The attention of these pupils was then drawn to the circumstances surrounding repeated falls and which must be taken into account : What was the number and rhythm of the faults ? Was the con-

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<sup>1</sup> The whole account of Paul Claudel's conversion has been published in the *Revue des Jeunes*, 10th October 1913. — Th. MAINAGE, *Les témoins du renouveau catholique*, Beauchesne, 1917. — Ch. DU BOS, *Approximation*, 6th series, pp. 261-269, with a long commentary, pp. 269-363.

sciousness of the malice of sin and God's desires sharper ? Were the spiritual reflexes of repentance more prompt and more profound ? Sin which is at first a human act is never the same act. It has the absolute novelty, original individuality, the essential difference of every existential event.

*C. There are causes which result from the structure of the modern conscience.* — We refer particularly to pride, the wish to safeguard one's secret, the lowering of faith in the Sacrament and in the Priesthood, the lukewarm love of God.

1. *Pride.* — One thinks that one can resist the temptation alone. One does not want to call upon either God or the priest.

“ There are times in one's life when one needs to remain at a certain stage, without changing one's life in any way. One is like the Pharisee, full of oneself, strong ” (17).

2. *The Wish to Safeguard One's Secret.* — The question : Are you annoyed when the priest questions you, or do you like him to do so ? could, by obtaining personal answers, provide information on the desire for autonomy of the subjects.

11 declare that it annoys them, 26 on the contrary, like it and desire it, because they make a better confession and will be more helped. The *substantial* quality has nothing to do with age.

Some of the remarks are sensible, others amusing :

“ No, but I don't say to him ; “ Ask me ! ” (13).

“ I prefer not to be asked too much ” (15).

“ Sometimes the questions are too unexpected, too direct, too embarrassing ” (15).

“ I like it, if the priest knows me ” (16).

“ I am annoyed, if the priest does not know me. The questions do not meet the case ” (17).

“ It depends on how it is done ” (16).

The delicate problem of the connection between confession and confidence comes into this matter of supplementary questioning (to make sure of the sincerity of the accusation) and asking for explanations (so as to give more appropriate advice).

*Is confession a confidence ?* The answers were sensible and theological :

23 : It is not a confidence.

10 : It is a confidence (they were thinking of the seal of secrecy).

The distinction is drawn between sacramental confession and a sentimental confidence.

- "Confidences are easy, confession difficult" (14).
- "One expects consolation from confidence, pardon from confession" (14).
- "Confidence is free, optional, confession obligatory" (15).
- "A confidence is the explanation of one's life and feelings, confession is the declaration of a particular thing" (15).
- "In a confidence one excuses oneself, in confession one accuses oneself" (17).

Jacques Rivière has given a long psychological analysis in which he distinguishes, placing them in opposition to one another, literary and religious confession :

"It is the *mea culpa* which makes all the difference between literary and religious confession. It cannot be denied that at the bottom of literary confession, however sincere, difficult, close to the truth it may be, there is a sort of pleasure and a kind of after-taste of honey. It is the pleasure of unveiling oneself as an individual, a unique and inimitable personality ; and every disclosure of a vice even, provided that it has no resemblance to another, contributes to strengthen this pleasure. But at the bottom of religious confession, there is, on the contrary, that unpleasant bitter taste of the *mea culpa*. The Confiteor opens like a pass leading inevitably to it. One enters upon it, not in order to make disclosures, but to submit. Instead of the pleasure of finding oneself to be unique and inimitable, there is at bottom the horror and shame of recognizing that one partakes of the great universal turpitude, that one has plunged into that anonymous and frightful sea of sin, that one has become like everyone else, that one has been that which bears an eternal name such as : slothful or lustful or jealous. That is why definition, or individualization of the fault in one's confession is contrary to the very aim of it. That is why the questionnaires ready-made in the prayerbooks to facilitate the examen of conscience are, because of their generality, their lack of subtlety and individuality perfectly appropriate to the aims of confession." <sup>1</sup>

3. *Lack of Faith*. — If one goes less frequently to confession, it is because faith is lukewarm. This devaluation is shown by numerous signs :

a) One has less sense of sin :

- "One waits to have committed a mortal sin" (13).
- "One is unaware of having committed any sin." <sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> J. RIVIÈRE, *A la trace de Dieu*, Gallimard, 1925, 45th ed., pp. 196-199.

<sup>2</sup> It is important to distinguish carefully between the *sense of sin* (the moral and spiritual viewpoint) which is the normal reaction of conscience to sin committed ;

b) One has not sufficient belief in the efficacy of the Sacrament.

c) One sees the confessor as a man first and afterwards as God's representative. We attempted to discover the sensitiveness of the conscience by asking : Do you prefer to go to Confession to a priest whom you know rather than to one who is unknown to you ? Why ?

The reactions are varied : 14 prefer an unknown priest ; 19, one whom they know ; 5 are indifferent.

*An unknown priest :*

— " I can tell him everything " (13).

— " Unknown, because it seems to me that if the priest knows us, he might think us incapable of making progress and might get tired of listening to us always committing the same faults " (15).

— " Unknown, for he knows, afterwards, what sins we have committed " (15).

*A priest who knows us :*

— " Because he knows me and can help me better " (13).

— " He knows my failings better and my surroundings ; his advice is more appropriate " (13, 14).

— " He asks us if we have kept our resolutions, and questions us about our habitual sins " (14).

— " I am less confused, I trust him " (18).

— " The priest is a guide for me " (19).

*Known or unknown priest :*

— " The Sacrament is the same " (13).

— " They are God's representatives " (13).

— " They never remember what has been told them in the confessional " (14).

Some charming replies which demonstrate the subtleties of the feminine soul :

— " A priest whom I know but who does not know me " (15).

— " A priest whom I know but not too well " (16).

4. *No Desire to Progress in The Love of God*, to offer to God a soul more and more pure, at His disposal.

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the *feeling of guilt*, which is the purely psychological reaction of the conscience in face of the sin and in the heart of an existential situation which is not necessarily sinful and the *nervous feeling of guilt*, due to the process of dramatization engendered by an uneasy conscience. Dr. A. HESNARD would have done well to make these distinctions in his two books : *L'Univers morbide de la faute*, P. U. F., 1949 and *Morale sans péché*, P. U. F., 1954.



These last causes are the most important to explain the habitual neglect : devaluation of faith, lukewarmness of the Christian life. Confession is difficult because of contrition, contrition is difficult because of the persistent attachment to the sin ; attachment to a sin remains because attachment to God is too weak. Youth has delivered itself from formalism ; they do not go to confession for the sake of it, if strong sociological reasons do not force them to it. If they confess they wish to do it seriously. That confession which, with contrition, exacts the conversion of the heart, frightens them. With this in mind, read the following unhappy account :

" ...Some hours earlier, obeying the promise which his mother dragged from him every year, Fabien went into a church of a demoralizing ugliness and there, in the way in which one throws a dangerous parcel into a well, he crouched under a black curtain, a curtain of guilt, to whisper into the ear of a man hidden behind a grille his most shameful actions during the past twelve months. He came out of the confessional afterwards, his face on fire, discontented and troubled, discontented because he had just humiliated himself before an unknown person, troubled because at the bottom of his heart he was convinced that something had taken place, not merely that plunge into the odd piece of furniture, that murmur of words, that Latin, but something else, something more. His difficulty lay precisely in that. If he had had no belief, with what lightness of heart he would have quitted that place of genuflections and signs of the cross where, anyway, one only saw old people !

" That faith which he still had, almost in spite of himself, upset the little pleasures of his existence every spring. Every spring, there was that strait waistcoat which he had to put on his mind at least for twelve hours ; until the moment of communion, to defend from any sensual attack a brain which revolted against such a discipline and a body which understood nothing of that kind of bullying... Tomorrow, everything would be as before, life on the one side and religion on the other...

" That half day of constraint which would never come to an end...

" Ah ! Let it all be over quickly, let him go to sleep and tomorrow there would be that moment when the priest would pass in front of him with the ciborium ! And after that... Afterwards... It seemed to him that not only in his mind but in his whole being there was a sort of urge forward to that liberation of the senses. " <sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> JULIAN GREEN, *Si j'étais vous*, French translation, Plon, 1947 ; pp. 9-10. In the last volume of his *Journal*, the author, with a transparent sincerity, describes that divergence which corresponds to a moment in his spiritual evolution : " 26th June, 1951. Breakfasted with a religious to whom I said this : ' In each one of us, there is a sinner and a Saint. Both develop, each on the plane proper to him. Both, not one or the other. The two of them at the same time. While the saint is developing, if the man is a saint, the sinner in him develops on the imaginative plane (the temp-

## II. CONFESSION AND SPIRITUALITY : WHY MUST WE GO TO CONFESSION ?

It is necessary to reeducate people of all ages in these days with regard to the meaning of confession and to present the Sacrament of Penance as that of the Divine Friendship. Christ Jesus, setting us in our true position as sinners, making us aware of our real culpability, opens to us the ways of liberation which end in liberty, the liberty of the children of God. " You will know the truth and the Truth shall make you free ! " (John, VIII, 32). It is from this viewpoint that Paul Claudel's prayer should be interpreted :

Deliver me from myself ! Deliver me from my condition as a being !

I shall be free, deliver me from liberty ! <sup>1</sup>

Let us study successively the psychological liberation from anguish which confession helps us to obtain, the spiritual liberation from sin which sacramental absolution grants, the progress in divine love, the stages in which grace allows us to mount.

### A. PSYCHOLOGICAL LIBERATION

It is important, in a century in which psychology is the fashion, and in which it is being increasingly developed, and is becoming more and more recognized as a science with a precise object and strict methods, to emphasize the psychological effects of confession on our self-knowledge and peace. People go less often to confession, but they are more and more troubled and neurotic. Father Verdun <sup>2</sup> has sent out an S. O. S., announcing the mental peril. The statistics

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tations vary from year to year, following a particular curve according to the individual temperament) while the saint develops on the spiritual plane. If the man is a sinner, that is to say, if the sinner is stronger than the saint, the saint develops as he can on the imaginative plane (nostalgia for sanctity). From that it happens that a converted sinner never starts from scratch. He has progressed during his sinful life. The saint who should have been has progressed. In the same way, the mystic who falls is a freed sinner, because the fleshly man has not ceased to develop in spite of the saint's efforts'. " (*Journal*, vol. VI (1950-54), Plon, 1955, p. 95).

<sup>1</sup> Paul CLAUDEL, *Cinq grandes Odes*, Gallimard, 1936, 23rd ed., p. 53.

<sup>2</sup> Dr. M. VERDUN, S. J., *Le péril mental*, Coll. Animus et Anima, Vitte, 1953. In spite of all the criticisms which it deserves and has received, many of the analyses in the book *Psychanalyse de Paris*, by Frédéric HOFFET (Grasset, 1954), are well founded.

which he has collected have a lugubrious eloquence. There is an implacable vicious circle involved: social conditions unsettle the personality and neurotics have a dangerous effect on the groups to which they belong. Pierre Emmanuel speaks of this "gigantic collective neurosis which a whole army of psychoanalysts only succeed in making worse."<sup>1</sup> Karen Horney studies, in a book with a revealing title, the nature of the modern neurotic, his conflicts, worries, difficulties of adaptation.<sup>2</sup> Indiscretion seems to be one of the crying needs of our period. Too many writers do not hesitate to reveal themselves in public confessions, to dilate in intimate Journals — true literary prostitution — upon their temptations, faults, experiences, or to project their own states of soul into the heroes of their novels. The contemporary conscience is greedy for communication and communion and all the characters in Gabriel Marcel live it, cry it, shriek it.

Psychoanalysis is tending to free itself from the doctrinal contexts which up to now have shed a false light upon it. Freud's pan-sexualism can only detain those whose objectivity has not reached the integral experience of man. Jung's Metaphysics, at first sight favourable to the spiritual values, appears more dangerous still, by its syncretism, to enlightened minds.<sup>3</sup> Several psychoanalysts have understood that the human being is filled with a desire for the absolute which must find its response. The psychotherapist will work to liberate this desire for the absolute and direct it towards God, the real Absolute. Without denying psychoanalysis its value, for this to be fully achieved it must be integrated into a higher endeavour. Itself liberated, it will become a liberator. Psychoanalysis must be psychoanalysed.<sup>4</sup> Man's truth lies in his relations with the Absolute, his balance in the *living* relationship with this Absolute, neurosis is infidelity to that Absolute, the isolation of that Absolute.

Sacramental confession is not and should not be considered as a confidence. But it plays the part and partially fills the psychological function of that liberation which we seek when making a confidence. Moreover, in confession, the soul is open, not so much to

<sup>1</sup> Pierre EMMANUEL, *L'ouvrier de la onzième heure*, p. 218.

<sup>2</sup> Karen HORNEY, *La personnalité névrotique de notre temps*, Paris, L'Arche, 1953.

<sup>3</sup> Henri NIEL, *Psychoanalyse et Religion d'après C. G. Jung*, Critique, Dec. 1954, pp. 1056-1066.

<sup>4</sup> Wilfred DAIM, *Unwertung der psychoanalyse*, Verlag Herold, Vienna, 1951. Igor A. CARUSO, *Psychoanalyse und synthese der existenz*, Herder, Vienna, 1952. In *Wort und Wahrheit*, March 1955, there is an article entitled: *La maladie de la psychoanalyse*.

the priest who is the mediator, as, through him, to God Whom he represents and Whose pardon he distributes. The soul is put in relationship with the Absolute. 31 of the replies were in the affirmative to the question : Is confidence a psychological necessity ?

— “ If one opens one’s heart to someone, one feels happier and feels that one is no longer alone to bear one’s burden ” (13).

— “ People who can keep a secret to themselves are rare. Secrets are tiring and depressing ” (15).

The same children emphasized that confession is not a confidence, but who can deny that it is a liberation for the soul ?

Father Beirnaert has stated that confession must not be confused with psychoanalysis : “ A priest who wished to psychoanalyse his penitent would end by making a bad psychoanalysis and giving bad direction. ”<sup>1</sup> It is one thing to *confuse* psychoanalysis and confession, another to *deny*, or even to *limit*, the psychological effects of confession.<sup>2</sup> Christ wished and is able to save *every* man and the *whole of man*. Grace transforms our nature and penetrates our whole psychism. The testimony of souls is stronger than all the discussions of the schools. It is also evident that the confessor cannot replace the doctor, in all the cases in which his intervention is necessary. There are cases in which the patient is obliged to admit, “ The doctors cannot cure me ” and, instead of despairing, can, with St. Thérèse of Lisieux, become convinced that “ one obtains from God in the measure of one’s hope. ” In the light of the preceding distinctions, read the following lines by René Schwob.

“ Confession is such a great thing that it enforces purity by the humiliation which it entails, and which once it has been swallowed is miraculously replaced by a new purity and a new possibility of rising higher. A marvellous psychoanalysis, but first the tunnel of sin, the bowed head, the shame of laying bare one’s ignominy. Humiliation gains us a further step forward in humility, the final consciousness of our infinite weakness... our wretchedness, combined with our insatiable desire for greatness. ”<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup> *Direction spirituelle et psychologie*, Études carmélitaines, Desclée De Brouwer, the article by Fr. Beirnaert. — *Direction spirituelle et psychologie*, pp. 313-330.

<sup>2</sup> Marc ORAISON, *L’action thérapeutique du Sacrement de Pénitence*, *Supplément à La Vie spirituelle*, 15 November 1954, pp. 412-430.

<sup>3</sup> René SCHWOB, *Moi Jui!*, p. 100.



## B. SPIRITUAL LIBERATION

The first object of the Sacrament of Penance is to deliver the souls which are captives of sin, but it should be envisaged in its complementary aspects : liberation from sin by absolution and a new life of grace with *new* strength, for a *new* advance, a *new* start. It is at the service of the *new* man, for the renewal of man. The answers to the questions : Why do we go to confession ? demonstrate and unite these two aspects :

— “ To obtain new graces, to preserve the divine life in us, to give it back to us if we have lost it, and especially to make our soul new again ” (13).

— “ To be freed from that kind of worry which is ours when we know that we have committed a sin which has separated us from God ” (13).

— “ To destroy the wall of sin which separates us from God, to be strengthened in God’s friendship ” (15).

— “ To remain in a state of grace with God and even if I am not separated from Him, the benefits of the Sacrament help me in the fight against sin ” (15).

To these girls the Sacrament of Penance appeared as what it is — the Sacrament of divine Friendship.<sup>1</sup> The state of grace is the normal state of the Christian, the life of friendship with God. It is therefore important to preserve this friendship. If a mortal sin has been committed, we must strive after perfect contrition, which gives back the friendship of God to us (and delivers us from the psychological worry which is sometimes so acute), but we must go to confession as soon as possible, in order to be able to receive communion. Putting off confession to a tomorrow which never comes creates a *series of mortal sins*. If we wait to have committed a mortal sin before going to confession, we place ourselves in a state of lukewarmness and mediocrity, which makes sin possible or necessary. S. Weil writes profoundly : “ There are cases in which a thing is necessary simply because it is possible. ”<sup>2</sup> If it is indispensable to go to confession to regain grace *because* one has committed a mortal sin, it is no less indispensable spiritually to go to confession, *so that* one may not commit it, when certain signs become mani-

<sup>1</sup> We highly recommend the following, which analyse Christian life from this standpoint : H. D. NOBLE, O. P., *L’Amitié avec Dieu*, Desclée de Brouwer, 1932, and confession at the service of this friendship : P. MELLET, *La Pénitence, Sacrement d’Amitié*, Coll. Études religieuses, Office Général du livre.

<sup>2</sup> S. WEIL, *Cahiers*, vol. II, Plon, 1953, p. 127.

fest in us whose convergence should place us in a state of alert : resistance to evil becomes weak, the temptation is more harassing, the fervour of our love for God is low. Is not this *preventive* confession ?

Luc Estang, in a page overflowing with practical faith, adjures priests to understand with what a desire for renewal sinners rush to them at certain times, and to welcome them :

“ Oh ! May you be spared the horror of sacrilegious confession ! There are no difficulties on that score. He who comes to you that you may deliver him from his sins forgets who you are, as you forget who he is. He speaks to Christ behind you, and it is Christ Who forgives him with your raised hand. But there are times when one fears to trouble the ‘ curé ’ by asking for the priest’s help. You must understand me. It is customary to impress upon children the fearfulness of mortal sin, recommending them never to go to sleep until they have confessed it, if they have committed one during the day. Such lessons sharpen a soul, and the soul who has heard them remembers them in times of distress. It often happens that these hours of distress are precisely those night hours, hours for mortal sin. It is not yet perhaps that repentance has come, but who knows ? it may be an occasion for repentance. The thought of the night bell ringing for the sacraments comes to the sinner, but immediately follows the sardonic reflection : ‘ How surprised the Father would be if I were to wake him to tell him, ‘ No one is dying, Father, I have only come to accuse myself of having committed adultery. ’ ”

” And the next day, which mercy has made into a day when one is still alive, drives away the uneasiness which had alerted grace. ” <sup>1</sup>

### C. SPIRITUAL PROGRESS

The Sacrament of Penance is at man’s service to enable him to realize his vocation, which is holiness. But for confession to become a means of moral enrichment and spiritual ascension, certain conditions must be carried out : regularity of confession, continuity of direction, complete openness.

1. *The Regularity of Confessions.* — The question : When should we go to confession, when is it necessary ? When is it useful ? referred to the two perspectives, moral and spiritual. The replies show a variety of interesting points of view : Some are concerned with the motives which induce these souls to receive the Sacrament, some define the rhythmic frequency.

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<sup>1</sup> LUC ESTANG, *Le Passage du Seigneur*, Ed. Robert Laffont, 1946, pp. 226-7.

a) *Motives* :

- “ When one feels the need. ”
- “ When one is uncertain about something. ”
- “ When one has committed too many venial sins. ”
- “ When one feels out of touch with God. ”
- “ When one feels unsafe ” (17).
- “ When one feels the urge ” (16).

b) *The frequency of the rhythm* :

- “ Regularly. One would put it off more and more, let oneself be deadened by one's sins ” (16).
- “ Very regularly. It is an education which is not achieved in one go. One has to find out the efforts which have succeeded ” (16).
- “ As often as possible ” (2 pupils of 13).

Many give more exact indications, suggesting fortnightly or monthly confession. Some, confession before the great liturgical feasts. Regularity maintains the state of grace, preserves fervour, leads to frequent resolutions and the exercise of an effective self control.

2. *Continuity of Direction*. — Is it best to go always to the same priest ? 35 answered in the affirmative, 5 prefer change :

- “ Not the same. More freedom for certain accusations ” (15).
- “ I do not like always going to the same ” (15).
- “ Another can help more ” (15).

There was a fair amount of indifference as to the confessor's age. However, 13 preferred a young priest, 8 an old one, 4 a “ middle-aged ” priest. It must be noted that, in their minds, one is “ old ” at 40-50. The motive given is the same, understanding. Some estimate that the young priest understands better “ because he has lately known these difficulties ” (13) ; others go by preference to the old priest (40, 50 years old), because he unites authority and experience ; some, eclectic enough, turn towards the “ middle-aged ” priest, who has as much understanding as the young ones and more experience than they have. One girl introduces a distinction which we must not ignore : “ If he does not know me, young or old ; if he knows me, old ” (16). These girls, owing to the circumstances of their lives, prefer parish priests (13 are indifferent ; 16, secular priests ; 4, religious).

If decision is for the same confessor or an occasional one, if the priest is young or old, it is because definite help is asked of the confessor, appropriate advice, consecutive direction.

What do you ask of the confessor ? All say, advice, consolation, support.

- “ For uplift. To become aware of my faults ” (15).
- “ Explanation of my faults so as not to begin again ” (15).
- “ Consolation. Direction of my efforts ” (15).
- “ Advice, simple and clear words ” (16).
- “ Great comprehension and goodness, because he represents Jesus ” (16).
- “ Great severity and firmness — to set me before my responsibilities ” (17).
- “ He must make me understand what God wants of me ” (17).
- “ Someone to whom I can talk outside the confessional ” (18).

As a background to these judicious remarks of adolescents, two testimonies from two writers who have analysed with penetration the mentality of this critical and divine age, looking back on their own experiences.

“ The unchanging method : recourse twice a year to the ‘ Extraordinary confessor ’ disposes the generations of pupils in religious institutions to choose, later on, for their perhaps more searching accusations, unknown priests, quite ignorant of the soul which suddenly opens itself to them, powerless to discern the adhesions of malignant cancers submitted to them. Young Fr. Lorraine held forth against this practice. He suffered when he perceived that one of his penitents had preferred a chance confessor to him. Not through sacerdotal vanity, he could swear before you, Lord. But through distress at not inspiring enough trust in the soul which should have felt itself always in his sight as in that of God. The concealment, however episodic and slight, deprived him of giving the help which it was his mission to provide. He felt, supernaturalized, some of the disillusion of a doctor whose patient hides a symptom from him and tells it to a fellow doctor incapable of formulating the general diagnosis. Experience led him to more comprehension. He admitted the wisdom of the proceeding, the charity which inspired it. He knew that there existed peccadillos more difficult to confess than serious faults ; not bound to confess them, because venial, the culprit ended by looking on them as unconfessable ; in the end, although not scrupulous, their accumulation weighed upon him. Human respect was naturally in evidence among young penitents whose ordinary confessor was a professor or a prefect. A strange priest facilitated the complete unburdening. ”<sup>1</sup>

— “ A good recovery, and I should have come to myself : a few words from the Abbé Devert, and my will would have been revived. But the idea of confession terrified me, not in itself : during those two years, I went several times to confession, and always made a bad one, to chance priests, whose exhortations missed their mark. I knew that these lamentable attempts

<sup>1</sup> LUC ESTANG, *Cherchant qui dévorer*, Ed. du Seuil, 1951, p. 95.



were only subterfuges with God : never mind who gave me absolution, only one man could guide me ; and that man, whose priesthood I forgot, I feared would be ashamed of me, I could not imagine myself before him... I left the Abbé Devert without saying good-bye ; running the risk of meeting him each day, I trembled when passing his door ; I invented a hundred childish detours. I never saw him once. We had mutual friends : he never once made use of them to call me, or to learn something of me. I knew later that he had guessed all : he was waiting, praying and his thoughts never left me. ”<sup>1</sup>

3. *Full and Filial Disclosure*. — Numerous penitents complain of their confessor : they expect much and find little. They go away and do not return. If they do return, it is devoid of any illusion, empty of any expectation. They will receive absolution, their final aim, their need, what no one other than the priest can give them in a Church in which Christ has willed that there should be this mediation, so humane and merciful. They have, however, the certitude that the Sacrament could produce more abundant fruits, that it is ordained in view of a sanctification which is not realized.

Numerous confessors could complain of their penitents. If they do so little, psychologically and spiritually speaking, it is because, often, they are not allowed to do more. Their action is limited by the limited confidence. They are hindered from giving clear directions by the evasive replies to their questions, however discreet. The penitent may wish to be treated as a child and led along the paths of the Lord, but fails to show an absolute filial confidence. Exceptional enlightenment is asked of a priest who has not the intuitions of the Curé d’Ars, and our accusations are reduced to a strict minimum, a dry, rapid, impersonal, litany.

P. Emmanuel has described in a wonderful page the marvellous confessor whom he met during his adolescence and the method which he employed in his sacramental contacts with souls :

“ The abbé Jean Devert never scamped his confessions. Contrary to the other priests who worked by rote, not even listening to us. We went to confession more as a diversion from classwork than to lay open our state of soul. The abbé Devert had therefore few followers : it was by chance that I took my faults to him.

” Until then, confession had been an annoying task, not without its distressing side : I was scrupulous in my accounts, but preferred to confess to a deaf person who would send me away, washed, with two decades of the rosary to say. For the first time, I was in contact with a man who felt that confession is a diagnosis : a true physician of souls, not one of those who

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<sup>1</sup> P. EMMANUEL, *Qui est cet homme ?* Paris, Egloff, 1947, pp. 99 et seq.

distribute their advice at a venture, but a man who weighed each word at its just value ; clear-sighted, besides, reducing to their real extent those sins which our anxiety magnified ; finally, a man of prayer, who knew that prayer does not lie in words, but in the reflection which the words arouse, and, especially in the free disposition of a loving heart : a director of conscience. There is no sacrament without joy : the Sacrament of Penance is in one sense the most joyful of all, since it gives back a soul to God ; it should be a feastday sacrament. The abbé Devert had the genius to change humiliation into an offering : he replaced an act which had become mechanical in its eternal setting. He made us feel that, freeing us from our faults, we were responding to God's gift by another one...

" In a few weeks, my confession gave me a religious sense... it taught me in this way that spiritual watchfulness is the effort to know oneself, the detection and examination of one's interior energies, then their conquest and direction towards their highest expression by a conscience penetrated by the divine. " <sup>1</sup>

The priest should wish to reach an individual soul, a human personality, created by and for God, with his vocation, his graces and his needs, a personality in evolution, setting problems of growth and orientation. What he sees is a series of men and women lining up before him and, through the monotonous flow of stereotyped accusations, he seeks in vain, often, for the appeal of a soul, and so rarely perceives the vital reaction of a conscience expressed in such phrases as, " Father, I have had enough of my mediocre life! " — " I feel that God is asking something of me, help me to discover it! " He never finds a real face, spiritually speaking. It is a lugubrious procession of faceless beings who advance, in the funereal rhythm of habit, with the peakless horizons of a formalist religion. All the faults are on the same level, spoken in the same tone of voice. They are like a banking account, they never show the position of the soul. The man hides himself at the same time as he reveals himself, as a hero of Julian Green's owns :

" I was called, said the young man to himself, that is certain. And that call which I would not hear has created an insurmountable solitude around me. At the same time, what was good in me has been corrupted. The habit of continence has only fed the good opinion which I have always had of the man I am, I own it without humility. To speak like a specialist, I expose myself to temptation, but I have never passed on to the act ; I keep prudently on the borders of sin ; in confession I only have peccadillos of which to accuse myself, evil thoughts, — the saints have had them — unkind words. We are asked to confess what we are. Behind these peccadillos I hide what I am. A big sin would disclose me. " <sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> P. EMMANUEL, *Qui est cet homme?* pp. 88-89.

<sup>2</sup> J. GREEN, *Si j'étais vous*, p. 122.

If only penitents had the disposition expressed in the remark of a girl of 17: "I want the priest to make me understand what God desires of me!"

## CONCLUSIONS

Some conclusions seem clearly marked in these pages in which, so sincerely, so simply, girls open to the supernatural and Catholic writers, with a greater inner experience of souls, say what they expect and what they fear, what they desire and what disappoints them.

To confine ourselves to the replies to this enquiry, a very limited one, the subjects questioned reveal good mental and moral health, a balanced judgment for their age. They calmly envisage confession as an instrument for knowledge of self, of psychological and moral deliverance, of progress in divine love. They do not separate the confession of their faults from a certain direction of their souls. The irenical nature of these replies is due to the atmosphere of trust, liberty, of personal development, in which their education is carried on.

Christian teachers have to adopt an attitude required both by their respect for the Sacrament of Penance, and by their will to help the souls entrusted to them. They must not exert any pressure on adolescents. Confession should be a personal act. It is more important to make a good confession than to go to confession. Some complain that there are not enough confessions; it is to be feared that there are too many. If confidence exists, one may discreetly encourage one or another to go to confession, indicate a confessor whom one knows and who will be the man of God in the particular situation. Above all, the atmosphere of living faith must be created, of love of God in which confession becomes a need of the soul, is considered as being a source of renaissance and liberty. To give to young people a will for liberation by letting them perceive true liberty: the possession of self leading to the gift of self.

Priests,<sup>1</sup> in spite of their preoccupation with urgent apostolic duties, the fatigue of long sessions in the confessional, should not forget that each confession might be — and is so rarely! — an

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<sup>1</sup> *L'Église, éducatrice des consciences par le Sacrement de Pénitence*, Congrès de l'Union des Œuvres, 1952, Nancy, Union des Œuvres, 31, rue de Fleurus, Paris VI<sup>e</sup>.

event for a soul ; that, the soul awaits a word from God through the priest speaking in His Name. The confessor should work to liberate the spiritual energies driven by the penitents into the depths. There are men who are sexually inhibited. We are nearly all of us *spiritually inhibited*. Both the psychology in which the sin of the penitent is set, and the spirituality towards which the forgiven soul should journey, should guide the confessor in his pastoral activity. The whole man should be understood and saved, in his roots and his peaks. His possibilities for evil may be neutralized and his possibilities of rising above himself discovered !

*Is not man a tree walking,  
When he raises his head, extends his branches towards Heaven,  
It is thus that he drives his roots into the earth.*

*I will discover them : bending down I will touch my foot with my finger,*

*I thought that it was enough to pasture my people in justice, strength and wisdom.*

*And that Heaven like Hell is apart from the knowledge of men.*

*But no more than the clever farmer can avoid knowing the winds and the seasons and the influence of the moon,*

*And the difference in the soils, their virtue and their warmth and their depth, and the quality of salts and waters,*

*And like the Shepherd of the flocks, rubbing the grasses, tastes them and looks round on all sides,*

*So the Shepherd of men, seated between Heaven and Hell, holding the balance and centre, Will reign in prayer and science.<sup>1</sup>*

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<sup>1</sup> Paul CLAUDEL, *Le Repos du Septième Jour*, Théâtre, La Pléiade, vol. I, p. 744.



# A Grace for Our Time : the Paschal Vigil in Parochial Life

by Henri LE SOURD, P. S. S.,

*Curé of the Parish of S. Sulpice, Paris*<sup>1</sup>

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For the fifth time we have been able to celebrate the revival of the Paschal Vigil. The wondering surprise of the first year has not passed away.

Now that we can look back from a little distance, the fruits begin to appear, even better than the freshness of the first flowering. I would like to consider these fruits from the parochial point of view. The Paschal Vigil is most decidedly a very beautiful liturgy ; its use has proved a source of precious graces for the faithful and indirectly for all those unbelievers (non-baptized or non-Catholics, or lapsed) for whom as parish priest I am responsible.

*Very Beautiful Liturgy.*

That is the most striking feature. First, as a contrast with what we knew before 1951. Without even mentioning the expressiveness of the rites, in the better and more effective setting of the new office, we must point out an important fact : the change in time has considerably increased the number of participants. At 10 o'clock in the morning we had trouble in collecting 400 to 500 people ; at 10 o'clock in the evening we have a congregation of 1,200 to 1,500. That is the

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<sup>1</sup> Monsieur LE SOURD (Henri), priest of St. Sulpice, was born in Paris in 1907. He was Director of the St. Sulpice Seminary at Issy from 1936 to 1939, and taught philosophy and gregorian chant there. He was mobilized in 1939, wounded and made prisoner at Blaregnies (Hainault) in May 1940. He was released on the 30th October, owing to his wounds. From 1940 to 1945 M. LE SOURD was private secretary to Cardinal Suhard ; from 1945 to 1949 he was superior of the Philosophical Seminary at Issy, and has been in charge of the parish of St. Sulpice in Paris since March 1949. He holds the diploma and laureate of the École Libre des Sciences politiques, holds a Master's degree in Law, Philosophy and Scholastic philosophy. — Address : Paroisse St-Sulpice, Paris, FRANCE (Editor's note).

bare fact. Besides, at 10 in the morning, the congregation consisted chiefly of persons of a certain age, mostly women who were free in the morning on a working day. In the evening, the congregation includes the usual proportion of men and workers.

Is this the result of a passing fancy? If that were the case, the figures would have a tendency to decrease, whereas the contrary is true, although we have refrained from advertising or bringing pressure to bear. We thought that the faithful should come of their own accord, not because they were urged to, but because they had understood a certain number of things which would draw them (later on I will define these things). And that is what is happening more and more.<sup>1</sup>

It is also the reason why the attendance at Mass on Easter day has not diminished for all that. On the contrary, something has happened which we did not expect: the faithful who come to the Paschal Vigil (and who therefore have their Easter mass at midnight), come back in the morning for the High Mass, which is usually less well attended...

We must add that the congregation at night is especially attentive, recollected in prayer and unanimous in the singing and the actions made in common. Usually, it seeks unison; on this night, it achieves it.

The dimensions of the church of S. Sulpice are not particularly favourable to an intimate atmosphere. But on this night, the faithful declare they feel themselves to be part of a family.

On arrival, they are side by side; on leaving, they are one. Prayer in common and Easter joy have broken the ice. Visitors have expressed this to me as their chief impression.

It is possible, indeed, that these results will not be improved upon much in future; perhaps they will not be entirely kept up in this parish in a university quarter, in which students and professors with their families are more and more leaving town for the Easter holidays.

I hope to find a troupe of scouts or older seminarists who wish to come up from the provinces to Paris for their holidays and would provide the liturgical service for us, while the S. Sulpice boys do the same for the parishes in Normandy, the Aisne or the Yonne.

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<sup>1</sup> The size of the congregation is all the more significant because, each year, the office of the Paschal Vigil has been celebrated in a greater number of parishes, either in Paris or in the country, where the families go for their holidays. There is no need any longer to return to Paris for it, as some of the families in the parish did in the first few years.

But the experience of these five last years has demonstrated other results, much more important. The Paschal Vigil has been revealed as a source of graces for the whole life of the parish, far beyond the actual ceremony itself.

Those who have not had the experience will think that I am exaggerating. Honestly, I do not think so. The simple existence of the Paschal Vigil brings out the value of the Easter mystery in the lives of the faithful, and our share in this mystery by baptism.

#### *A Source of Graces.*

A beautiful liturgy is itself a source of graces. We know that *a priori*. But experience reveals a much deeper influence than one would ever have believed possible.

In the first place, the celebration of the Paschal night makes the faithful realize better the *totality of the Paschal mystery*. Of course we have never ceased to state that Easter is the peak of the liturgical year, but in practice, the attention of the faithful was drawn more to the Last Supper and to Calvary than to the Resurrection. Holy Week was for them chiefly Holy Thursday and Good Friday. The procession of palms, announcing and anticipating the triumph of the Risen Lord (thus giving its true orientation to the whole of Holy Week) is unfortunately, at any rate in Paris, hardly observed. Palm Sunday is the Sunday on which the Passion is recited; it is above all the day on which one receives a blessed branch to take home or to the cemetery, and in consequence, the triumph of the Risen Lord is forgotten, and the true meaning of the liturgy is lost.

Easter Sunday came after Holy Week, as the epilogue rather than the achievement; and while Communion on Holy Thursday (when the 'Easter duty,' is performed if it has been omitted on Palm Sunday), the visit to the Altar of Repose, the stations of the Cross on Good Friday meant for most of the faithful (deprived of the whole rich content of the liturgy because of their hours of work and those of the services), Easter Sunday simply seemed to be a particularly solemn Sunday, but without any exact bearing on their lives as Christians.

Merely the fact of learning that there is now "a midnight mass at Easter like there is at Christmas" — however different may be the atmosphere of these two "midnight masses"<sup>1</sup> — restores

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<sup>1</sup> At Christmas the midnight mass collects a congregation of from 4,000 to 5,000 persons in our church, round a nucleus of 2,000 to 3,000 faithful, who really take

the importance of the Easter feast even for those in the parish who do not dream of coming : “ It is a big Feast then, like Christmas ? ”

For those who practice, the *adult baptisms* and the *renewal of the baptismal vows* by all those present are a very valuable opportunity for spiritual progress, as I will try to explain.

*Nothing New, and yet...*

It is not easy to describe progress in parochial life. It is like a deepening of our pastoral preoccupations, our manner of praying, preaching, hearing confessions, also of the attention of the faithful to what they have “ heard ” for a long time, but which has perhaps not been sufficiently insisted upon nor understood. Nothing new, only an emphasis on our part, an echo on theirs. Only, for both us and them, an entering into possession of riches always new and very old, family treasures.

I can do no more than enumerate some points which seem to me to be the most striking. They are based on reflections by my parishioners, and made chiefly to militants of specialized Catholic Action.

We had impressed on our flock that *baptism makes us participate in the Paschal mystery* ; that it plunges us into Christ’s death to make us live a new life with our risen Lord. The faithful found it difficult to understand, and we to explain, this. During the Paschal night, it is impossible not to understand it.

At the end of Lent, after having relived the hours of the Passion during Holy Week, it is impossible not to see what sin is with which we have to finish — what the Life is to which Christ calls us. The traditional effort of asceticism and renewal which marks Lent (or at least the will to “ do one’s Easter duties ”) here finds its accomplishment. At the same time, this effort no longer appears to be an optative, but a moral necessity, rooted in the depths of our supernatural being : in our condition as baptized persons. As for the Eucharistic Communion, we will never be able to forget after this Paschal night that it is at every Mass what it is during that night : the viaticum for the accomplishment, day after day, of our baptism, the entrance into the mystery “ of the blessed Passion, the Resurrection and glorious Ascension ” of Christ, of which the Church is celebrating the memorial. The teaching of St. Paul and the Canon of the Mass pass little by little, better than before, into the life of the faithful.

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part in the Mass, an almost equal number of those who do not practice, but come for a moment “ to see, ” standing crowded together in the unoccupied spaces.



We had indeed taught our flock that *baptism is a permanent reality*, an ever open *fount* of graces to be received, a daily *requirement* of a Life which will never on earth have finished freeing itself from sin and growing in faith. Our faithful knew this. They could reflect upon it when during the ceremony of Solemn Communion the communicants were invited to renew their baptismal vows. They could think of it particularly in those parishes which, like St. Sulpice since the XVII century, are accustomed to renew these vows in common at Vespers of Low Sunday. This renewal takes on a fresh significance with the Paschal Vigil.

It is no longer asked occasionally of children, but annually of adults. It is no longer required by a local paraliturgical custom, but by an official and universal invitation of the Church, at the summit of the liturgical year. The profession of faith by the children at their Solemn Communion is thereby increased in value : it is no longer a childhood gesture, but an adult act to which children are admitted, after a preliminary instruction.

Neither did we fail to emphasize in our teaching that baptism is an *ecclesiastical reality* ; that it makes us “ children of God and of the Church .” But baptism almost always seemed to be an individual act and a family festivity : the baptism of an infant in a family. The collective and liturgical renewal of the baptismal vows on the Paschal night, restored the complete perspective. And still more perhaps, on this same night, the celebration of the *baptisms of adults*, in the presence of all.

From one year to another the wealth of grace in these adult baptisms is revealed. It is manifest to all, on the one hand that to be baptized at birth and to find the Faith already in the family, are enviable privileges, involving responsibility, and not by any means something quite natural — and on the other hand that if there are Christians in whom their childhood’s faith is dormant, enfeebled, dying, there are non-Christians who, in the prime of life, seek the Lord in sorrow and find Him in joy. The triumph of the risen Christ : “ *Haec est victoria quae vincit mundum...* ”

Not that we have ever had many adults to baptize : one or two : three this year. And none at all last year. But it is enough to teach us things. The experience of last year has even been for us especially enlightening : henceforth, the absence of adult baptisms is felt as a void, an anomaly, a reproach.

For we emphasized in our teaching that one *is not baptized for oneself alone*, but for others also : “ *Christianus propter alios* ” — so as to be “ *in Christ and through Him alone, both saved and saviours* ” (Clement of Alexandria, quoted by Pius XII — Encycl.

*Mystici Corporis*). We often repeated to our faithful the words of the Lord : " Let your light shine before men... so that they shall glorify your heavenly Father " — and those of St. Peter : " You are a chosen race, a royal priesthood, a consecrated nation, a people God means to have for himself ; it is yours to proclaim the exploits of the God who has called you out of darkness into his marvellous light. "

In the Paschal night, before the lighted paschal candle, the emblem of Christ, Light of the world, — after the lessons have retraced the design which God drew from creation to the Redemption (*mirabiliter condidisti, mirabilius reformasti...*) — between the blessing of the baptismal water and the renewal of the vows of all the baptized — the adult baptisms set a serious question before the parochial community. What are we doing with the light which has been entrusted to us ? " I am the Light of the world... You are the light of the world. " We know God's design, are we working for its accomplishment ? This baptism whose inestimable grace we have received, are we sufficiently faithful to it for our lives to proclaim the marvels of the Lord before the eyes of all ?

From year to year, this question goes deeper into our consciences as priests, into the consciences of the faithful, into the parish life. It is a work in depth, like that of a spring which irrigates the roots of a great tree and gives it strength to bear fruit : " *Tanquam arbor plantata juxta rivos aquarum, quae fructum praebebat tempore suo.* "

" *My whole life, throughout the year, is permeated by it,* " was the conclusion of a militant of Catholic Action ; and, she added, " *Even these last two years when God did not allow me to attend this Paschal Vigil.* " We spoke the truth when we said that the beautiful liturgy of the Paschal night goes beyond its celebration, to be a source of grace to the whole parochial life.

Doubtless, there lies the answer to the disappointment of those who find that this liturgy does not much attract unbelievers. It is a fact : at Christmas, the Midnight Mass (if we succeed as we ought in making it something other than a crush or a concert), is more favourable than the Paschal night to the evangelization of the lapsed Catholics or non-Christians. Primarily, because they come in greater numbers. But if the mystery of the Paschal night remains too secret to attract those who are not prepared, *if it does not evangelize, it creates evangelists!* The faithful cannot take part in it without drawing from it a livelier consciousness of their apostolic responsibilities, which, after all, is what is most necessary and normal. We must also add that the Paschal night only produces its fruits under certain conditions, and we will end by attempting to define these.

*Some Conditions.*

It is essentially a matter of *atmosphere*. The Paschal night needs a parochial atmosphere which is already in *sympathy with an authentic liturgy* — I mean : the Church's liturgy, this liturgy which is shared and *lived in its deepest truth*. Only then can the Vigil produce its fruits of grace.

The parochial atmosphere must put the Church's liturgy more and more in its true place (not exclusive, but the first place). The great liturgy : that of the Mass and the offices of the liturgical cycle. All the popular devotions cannot replace it. Neither those of yesterday (or rather, of the day before yesterday), however legitimate they still are today : Holy Hours, Stations of the Cross in common, Benedictions of the Blessed Sacrament — and more so certain mission ceremonies, or " Masses recited by the choir. " Neither the " initiatives " of today (or perhaps of yesterday) : those imitations of the liturgy which range from transposition to counterfeit. What is good will be better if instead of hiding the great liturgy of the Church, it leads up to it. In any case, a parish which has not learnt, little by little, to draw from the most authentic sources, would probably remain disoriented when faced with the Paschal Vigil. It is obvious that the parochial atmosphere should have accustomed the faithful to enter actively into the liturgy. The celebration of the Paschal Vigil may be a thing of beauty, but it is not, however, a merely decorative ceremony. It is more than a series of passages to be read ; or to follow in one's book, as at a concert one sees the audience follow the score. It is an action — that of Christ in His Church — in which the faithful must learn to take an active part.

Finally, and above all, the Church's liturgy exacts that it should be lived in its deepest truth. It asks us to pass from the exterior to this *interior*, which the exterior is meant to translate and manifest. (Remember the emphasis of the encyclical *Mediator Dei* on this point.)

It requires the exterior and interior commitment of each one in *the Church's life*, communal and apostolic. A parish will not cull the fruits of the Paschal Vigil if it does not make the effort, not merely to take an active part in the usual liturgical celebrations, but to interiorise its liturgical life in such a way that it tends to permeate the *whole life* of the faithful. The liturgy should teach them that they have been plunged into the Paschal mystery in order to collaborate in it.

Such an atmosphere ought to have been especially stressed during

Lent, when the preaching and devotional practices should, more than ever, be in line with the liturgy, to help to become a living factor in the daily life of the baptized.

The celebration of the Paschal Night is *a grace for our time*. "In tempore, tritici mensuram." For a period of combats, when the Church is undergoing persecution, it is the grace to put our faith increasingly in the triumph of Christ, Crucified, Risen. For a missionary period, in which the Christian can no longer be ignorant of the fact that he is a little tiny pinch of leaven in an immense amount of dough, the grace of discovering more fully what baptism is, and the mission of the baptized.

If, according to the theme of this article, the liturgy is the representation of Salvation, we may say that it has been abundantly proved by the experience of these last five years : in the mystery of the Paschal Night, the liturgy is truly the *efficient* re-presentation, the *Sacrament of Salvation*.

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# A Missionary Parish in Buenos Aires

by François HOUTART

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In recent years most of the examples of pastoral revival have come to us from Europe and North America. It is a good thing to turn to Latin America and become better acquainted with what has taken place there. After a short reminder of the religious position in the Latin American continent, we will touch upon Argentina and Buenos Aires, in order to give the background to the pastoral activities of the parish which we are about to describe.

## I. GENERAL SURVEY OF THE RELIGIOUS SITUATION

### 1. *Latin America.*

It is useless to dilate upon the religious problems in South America ; they are well known and have on several occasions been described in this review. Up to the present, the civilization of Latin America has been chiefly rural and 94 % of the population is Catholic. The Catholic Faith has continued to be transmitted in spite of the social and religious disorders of these different countries, as a result of this traditionally rural character of the Latin American civilization. Even the tragic lack of priests has not had too great an influence on the transmission of the Faith, although it explains the fact that it is not an enlightened faith.

Today the position is rapidly changing. Numerous factors are at work in the disintegration of Catholicism. First there is the *economic and social revolution*. It is particularly rapid and consists

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<sup>1</sup> See the biographical notice in *Lumen Vitae*, IX (1954), 3, p. 459. The author has passed more than six months in Latin America ; he journeyed from the West Indies to Argentina, and worked for three and a half months in the parish which he is here describing. — Address : 21, rue aux Laines, Malines, BELGIUM (Editor's note).

chiefly in the introduction of both extractive and transformative industries. Overnight entire districts are being changed into industrial zones. The population is being drawn upon in all directions to provide the labour. The industrial transformation is being carried out sometimes under absolutely primitive social conditions. In the Bolivian mines, the plantations of Guatemala, the sugar factories in Cuba or Haiti, the manufactories of São-Paulo, the same social conditions are to be found that we knew in Europe more than a hundred years ago. Without any transition, a population with a rural tradition is being hurled into the rhythm of industrial civilization. A working class is being formed, still hardly conscious of its own existence ; but slowly it is being organized, outside, and often in opposition, to the Church.

Another factor of disintegration, linked with the preceding, is the sudden great increase in *urbanization*. The growth of the South American cities, and especially of the great cities, is in the nature of an extraordinary phenomenon. Already nearly 18,000,000 persons are living in towns of a million and more of inhabitants. Most of the large cities have doubled their population in the last ten or fifteen years. In the midst of all this, the Church cuts a sorry figure, for the parochial structures are not able to follow the rhythm of this growth in the urban population. The lower class districts especially are being formed practically outside any parochial organization. São Paulo has an average of 23,000 inhabitants per parish, Bogota 14,000, Montevideo 25,000, Buenos Aires 27,000, Mexico 35,000, Lima 16,000, Rio de Janeiro 23,000, Havana 60,000, etc. The traditional Catholic population, lost in the masses, is soon losing its Faith. *Communist action* is also a new factor unfavourable to the Catholic Church, although for the moment it has little influence on the masses, working chiefly among the intellectuals and the budding workers, organizations. Communism always works in this way and it is by this means that it has succeeded in penetrating countries with rural and sometimes Christian traditions, such as Russia and China.

Finally, there is the action of *Protestantism*. It is no secret that the protestants, especially of North America, are making a special effort to evangelize Latin America. Thousands of ministers have arrived in this continent since they have been turned out of China and a large part of India and Indonesia. Brazil is, in the opinion of the Protestant clergy, their best field of apostolate, since the Reformation. No doubt, their action has so far only had limited results, but it has succeeded in creating confusion in the people's minds, especially in the large towns. Recently an American Protestant

pastor belonging to a Pentecostal sect of California collected together tens of thousands of persons every evening over several months, first in the stadiums of Santiago de Chile and then in Buenos Aires.<sup>1</sup>

Faced by these factors of disintegration, there is little doubt of the dangers which Catholic life is incurring in Latin America. Catholicism in Europe, with its stronger institutions and a larger religious personnel, has been affected by similar causes and a very marked dechristianizing influence can be discerned on the new Christian communities, such as those in Africa. Catholicism in Latin America cannot escape the consequences, but it can become aware of them and adopt the pastoral measures to counteract this new problem.

## *2. Argentina.*

Argentina is a greatly urbanized country. While in 1868 only 26.04 % of the population was urban, in 1914 the figure rose to 52.07 % and to 61.04 % in 1947. Nearly 40 % of the whole population live in towns of 100,000 inhabitants and more. The capital, Buenos Aires, absorbs a large part of the urban population, the city and its suburbs today containing around 5,000,000.

Argentina is far and away the most urbanized country in the whole of South America, and we can imagine the evolution which most of the countries will know. The rural masses still have a deep faith. Ceremonies, such as the Marian Congress held at Catamarca in May 1954, can draw great crowds, whole villages making a journey of sixteen days on foot in order to take part. On the contrary, in the cities, these people have lapsed, finding it extremely hard to transmit any profound religious convictions to the following generations. Some sacraments continue to be received: baptism, First Communion, marriage to a certain extent, and Christian burials. In the large cities, however, there is already an indication of lapsing on these essential points.

The Eucharistic Congress in Buenos Aires exercised a fairly deep influence on the Catholicism of Argentina, and was the cause of a searching of conscience, especially amongst the laity. The

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<sup>1</sup> At Buenos Aires, the stadium where these meetings were held was only a few steps from the church of the parish described, and the author was able to observe these manifestations closely. Owing to religious ignorance, many of the participants had no idea that a Protestant sect was involved. The pastor worked so-called miracles in the name of Jesus. He made the assembled crowds pray, sing, act. This fact warns us not to place too great a value upon the collective religious manifestations so frequent in the Catholicism of Latin America.

beginning of Catholic Action coincided with that date. All the same, the influence of these manifestations on the masses should not be exaggerated, even although they are important in the life of the Church.

The parishes in the city of Buenos Aires have not been able to keep up with its growth. In 1855 there was an average of 8,000 inhabitants per parish ; twenty years later, in 1875, we already find that average increased to more than 17,000 and in 1900 the figure reached 43,000 and in 1910, 57,000. Since then the situation has improved to the extent that there is now an average of 27,000 parishioners, but this average must not deceive us, for 20 parishes have more than 35,000 and 6 of them 50,000 ; one even has 80,000 parishioners. It must be added that there are seldom more than 2 or 3 priests in each parish. Under such circumstances, how is it possible to avoid a rapid dechristianization of the masses ? The traditional method of parochial pastorate, centred on a group of the fervent and based on a policy of conservation is completely outmoded, and yet it is the only method employed in most of the parishes. The clergy are absorbed in the duties of administration of the sacraments and the spiritual care of their regular parishioners. Under these conditions there is an urgent need for a new form of pastorate.

The example which we wish to describe in this article is almost unique in Latin America, but is indicative both of the apostolic anxiety which is animating numerous young priests and of the possibilities of its realization in surroundings as difficult to deal with as those of a great South American city.

## II. PASTORAL WORK IN THE PARISH OF " TODOS-LOS-SANTOS "

The parish of All Saints in Buenos Aires is situated in a working class district, not far from the great cemetery : the " Chacarita. " The 20,000 inhabitants of the district are made up partly of middle class and officials and partly of workers with standard wages and finally of a poorer proletariat. One end of the parish bears the name of Cueva Negra (black cavern). It is composed of slums and up to a short time ago the police did not dare venture there.

Out of the 20,000 inhabitants, about 3,000 are Israelites. At the present time the parish contains hardly 500 catholics who practise their religion ; three years ago, when the present clergy took over the parish that figure was not more than 300. The number of



families in which all the members are practising Christians does not even rise to 50.

Three priests are attached to the parish, one of them only giving half his time, being also secretary in the Chancery Office.

The parish priest, father TRUSSO, and one of the curates have studied at Rome and have spent several months in France and Belgium. In those countries they made a point of enquiring into the different new pastoral methods and the specialized Catholic Action movements. After these various experiences they began their work in Buenos Aires.

There are three poles of action in the parish. First, the *altar*, or, the whole of the liturgical action. Next, the *neighbourhood*, that is to say, the missionary action, and finally, the formation of militants for the *various environments*, especially workers and student. Account had to be taken of the diverse circumstances in the parish : a self enclosed practising stratum of some hundreds, almost no militants with any real Christian training and finally a large mass of indifferent and often even hostile people.

### 1. *Liturgical Action.*

The parish church was gradually lightened of all the heavy and unsuitable ornamentation and the clergy made of it a quite simple building, with the altar in clear view. Each day Mass is celebrated with all possible care ; the priest has three quarters of an hour for each low Mass. On Sunday, the Mass with sermon takes about 50 minutes. At the beginning, some people were impatient at the length of the services, but now if a foreign priest celebrates the Mass in less than 35 minutes, the parishioners themselves express their astonishment.

The altar boys are very well trained : each altar boy has an alb and is obliged to wear it, even during the week. They are not allowed to serve Mass until they have learnt the rubrics thoroughly and have acquired a great respect for the sacred rites. All the Sunday Masses are dialogued and sung by the congregation. One priest gives the commentaries and directs the singing, another remains in the midst of the congregation to help to seat the people and lead the singing. Thus the three priests take part in each of the Masses. The commentary, the dialogue and the singing of the Sunday Masses have been studied by the priests during many months, so as to leave nothing to chance. The commentaries are very discreet, and rather than explain the priest's actions, they make the people take part in them themselves and realize their profound

meaning. The hymns correspond to the different parts of the Mass or the liturgical season. Many of the tunes have been either adapted or are taken from those used in the parish of the Abbé Michonneau in Paris or Fr. Gelineau's S. J. psalms. A special group have been working on them, to avoid any disharmony between the Spanish language and the music.

The parochial clergy have also prepared two missals ; one for children and the other for adults, so that they can follow the Sunday Mass, dialogue it and sing together. These missals have been composed at weekly meetings, using acquired experience. A translation of the liturgical texts has been made by the same team, joined for the occasion by some other priests, pastors and curates, seminary professors and religious.

Paraliturgy also has its place in the life of the parish, but only in the form of an auxiliary to divine service properly so-called.

On the great occasions of Christmas, Easter and some other feasts, ceremonies take place which attract a greater number of people others than the regular congregation. During Holy Week, for instance, there is a special service every evening, inspired by the office for the day and the season. On Holy Thursday, before the altar, there is a large map of Jerusalem, indicating the different places of the Passion of Our Lord. During the recital of the Passion, lights are lit which show the itinerary followed by Jesus. In the evening of Good Friday a Way of the Cross is organized in the streets, accompanied by hymns. The Easter Vigil on the night of Saturday-Sunday crowns the Week.

The sermon is always prepared in common at the priests' weekly meeting. The latter live together, as is the custom in most of the parishes of both North and South America. A subject is chosen for the year. For example, in 1951 and 1952, the Mass ; in 1953, Charity ; in 1954, Penance. During the different liturgical seasons (Advent, Lent, Eastertide), the liturgical subjects are treated in connection with the principal theme.

At each of the Sunday Masses, whoever may be the preacher (as a rule, it is the celebrant) the same sermon is given, so that, reference may be made to it in the meetings of the neighbourhood, catechism and confessions.

To end our account of the Sunday Mass, we must mention that in one of the districts of the parish, Mass is celebrated in a private house. This part of the parish is cut off from the church by a railway, and very few people went to Mass. This is now celebrated at the house of one or another of the Christians in the district, changing every three weeks or every month. It is an efficient means of

disseminating Christianity. Many people practise who had never been to the parish church.

The atmosphere of this Mass is very inductive to a more direct contact, by those present at the sacrifice, with the holy mystery.

## 2. *Missionary Work in The Neighbourhood.*

Instead of attempting to make the people of the neighbourhood come to the parochial buildings, whether by Sunday pictures, as formerly, or by other means, the priests have decided to centre the whole apostolate on the neighbourhood itself. Different undertakings have been started with this in view.

A. *The Block Missions.* — A geographical zone is chosen for the mission : a block of houses or a street, taking in the two sides. Daily or occasional contacts : baptism, catechism for first communion, visits of the statue of Our Lady, sick visiting or visiting families on the death of a member, etc., enable the clergy to discover someone likely to have an influence on the neighbours. If a whole family is found, it is obviously the best solution. These persons are asked to find a house in the block in which the neighbours can meet. These meetings take place in the evening, either about 7.30 or later, as it suits each one's convenience, for it is necessary that the men be able to come. On the last day of the mission, a little feast is organized in the house where the meetings have been held. This party is prepared by all the neighbours and creates a truly fraternal atmosphere.

The subjects of the five meetings are as follows :

*First day : Baptism gives us a new life : that of children of God.* — The priest says : We start from the following facts : the majority of you have been baptized ; you have your children baptized ; you fulfil the functions of godparents. But why ? Most of you don't know. The meaning of baptism is unknown to you. For many, baptism is only the occasion for a pretty feast, or the way of finding generous godparents or sometimes the result of a superstitious fear of God's punishments.

The positive explanation follows : as we are born of our parents into human life, so we are born into God's life through baptism. We are born again. The story of Nicodemus is told. God is our Father. We are the adopted children of God's family. We bear His name and enjoy the rights of the family. This is the origin of our true greatness.

*Second day : Baptism incorporates us into the Christian family.* — We all belong to a family. We grow up and are educated in this family. We love our relations, know them, defend them, support them when necessary. Through Jesus Christ, true Son of God, and at the same time a man like us,

we enter into the divine family. The family of God is the Christian family. Baptism introduces us into it as adopted children. We are all the members of a great body. Love, knowledge and mutual defence are the means of support of the Christian family, which exists in the whole world, but also in our neighbourhood, in our street.

*Third day : Baptism gives us the life of faith.* — We believe what the doctor, lawyer, architect, professor, say, because they are specialists in their branch of learning. This is human faith. In the course of the ceremony of baptism, we ask for faith. Christian faith is not only the fact of believing in God the Creator. What do we believe ? 1. That *God is our Father* and that He is good. 2. That *Jesus Christ* is much more than a celebrated man and a benefactor of humanity. He is sent from God, the *Only Son of God* made Man, and the author of our greatest grace : that we are the adopted children and friends of God. 3. That *Jesus Christ is represented on earth by the Pope, the bishops and priests*. This is the answer to the current objection : I believe in God, but not in the priests. In fact, the objectors themselves ask for baptism, marriage, communion, masses for their dead. They believe, not in the value of priests but in the fact that they are the representatives of Jesus Christ. Another objection has to be met : There are priests who... Yes, we know it and regret it with all our hearts.

This is the theme of this meeting and it generally seems to be the most popular.

*Fourth day : Baptism gives us the life of hope.* — Human faith produces human hope. The baptismal questions are explained : we ask for eternal life, that is to say, the life of God. The certain hope of Heaven which we already have on earth when we possess the life of God is the reality which baptism gives us. Hope also concerns the means which bring us to Heaven : prayer, courage in difficulties, the balance produced by Christian joy and optimism.

*Fifth day : Baptism gives us the life of charity.* — Through baptism we have a new filiation, a new family, a new fraternity. The result ? A new love : charity. This love embraces all without exception. The last day is the occasion for explaining the role of priests and especially to show that they are at the service of all for every necessity in the Christian community.

It is interesting to note the kind of people reached by these missions and their proportion in the different districts. The following are the figures for three missions. Total number of inhabitants of the first block : 149 ; 30 persons attended the mission, of which only 5 were practising Catholics. Second block : total number of inhabitants : about 100 ; 35 attended, of which 10 were practising. Third block : out of a population of 100, 11 attended the mission, of which 5 were regular churchgoers. The result of the mission depends greatly upon the preparatory work and especially on that of the laity who are responsible for their organization.



B. *Catechism*. — a) *The First Communion*. — The period of inscriptions for the First Communion catechism lasts about six months, and ends two or three weeks before the beginning of the classes. The conditions for inscription and perseverance are very strict. Only those are admitted to their First Communion who give guarantees of perseverance: their personal behaviour and the interest shown by the entire family.

The catechists are girls of the parish, and they not only teach the catechism but keep in permanent touch with the family and particularly with the mothers.

Mothers having children at the catechism classes must come to see the priests at least twice during the time of preparation. When possible, the fathers are invited to come at least once and the priests visit all the families. In 1952, the clergy allowed the children to wear what they liked; in 1953, they ordered more simplicity, especially in the matter of a short dress for the girls. In fact, the matter of costume was a kind of myth which, in many minds, screened the spiritual value of the sacrament. The whole catechism has been revised by the priests. It is divided into short lessons, beginning with a story, founded on the daily lives of the children. The subject is as follows: God our Father has done everything to make us happy. The greatest happiness is to be adopted children and friends of God. Jesus Christ, the Son of God, is our Brother and Saviour. We are all brothers in the Christian family which exists in the whole world. Much stress is laid on love of God, our Heavenly Father, and of everyone on earth, our brothers.

b) *The Catechism of Perseverance*. — All the children who have made their First Communion attend this catechism, up to the age of twelve. A lay catechist is responsible for a group of not more than ten children and she keeps in touch with the families, especially with the mothers.

The perseverance catechism is given on the occasion of the great liturgical feasts. One month beforehand, the children are grouped together, once a week in the family of one of them. The catechism thus really penetrates into their lives and the liturgical themes are developed with more realism. In these little groups, when the priest comes, practical means are employed: maps, liturgical picture books, photographs of biblical scenes.

It is true that we must have no illusions. The perseverance of the children in the Christian life depends much more on the surroundings and the family than on the teaching. The percentage of those who persevere is very low, in spite of all the efforts. The fact shows

the profound dechristianization of the district already. The percentages up to the middle of the year 1954 are as follows : From the First Communion of 1951 (132 children), that is to say after two and a half years : 25 %. From the First Communion of 1952 (140 children), that is to say after a year and a half : 40 %. From the First Communion of 1954 (106 children), that is to say after about six months : 60 %.

The children's perseverance in a Christian life does not only mean attendance at Sunday mass and the accomplishing of certain traditional actions. Therefore the whole atmosphere and the neighbourhood itself must be favourable to leading a real Christian life. That is why all other means will be employed for the progressive evangelization of the neighbourhood and, in the first place, of the families. This work will not produce all its results in one generation.

c) *Meetings of the mothers of families.* — In the different parts of the district mothers meet periodically at the home of one of them. They suggest the subject to be discussed. The result of these meetings is a greater union between the Christian mothers and mutual encouragement. It is an opportunity for the priests to discover those who are capable of undertaking more organized work in Catholic Action.

d) *The visit of the statue of Our Lady to homes.* — Every Tuesday and Friday from April until December, 8th the statue of Our Lady journeys from one home to another in the parish. Two teams of Catholic Action, composed of four persons each : a representative both of the men's and women's Catholic Action, of that of the girls and of the boys', visit the families to suggest their having the statue in their homes for a few days.

Our Lady's visit to the home is a splendid opportunity for contacts between laity and priests ; for the families are glad to welcome their neighbours to come and pray with them on these occasions. Conversations take place, and very cordial links are established.

When the statue is about to leave, one of the priests comes to the house, blesses it, recites the Rosary and speaks for about twenty minutes. He reminds his hearers that the visit of Mary is a bond of union between the families and leaves a copy of the Gospel in the home. During the year 1954 this visit was the occasion for preparing the parochial pilgrimage to Our Lady of Lujan.<sup>1</sup>

Every month the families who have received the statue of Our Lady meet in one of the houses, which gives them an opportunity

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<sup>1</sup> LUJAN is the national place of pilgrimage for Argentina and is 65 kms south of Buenos Aires.

of renewing the relations which have been established between them. The result of this kind of apostolate is an extremely interesting contact with many persons and families who are greatly dechristianized. No doubt it is only a tentative work, but it causes the destruction of many prejudices against priests or religion and allows of entrance into the family circle.

e. *Sick visiting.* — The priest visits the sick as regularly as possible, either in person or by means of laity acting in the name of the Christian community.

Little by little the inhabitants of the district are beginning to consider the presence of the priest at the bedside as normal, even if the case is not serious.

f. *The dead.* — After death the priest goes to the house and recites the prayers for the dead and a Rosary. The presence of the family gives him an occasion to explain the profound meaning of life and death. The first result is that there is now hardly any family which does not want their dead to be taken to the church before burial. If the family does not suggest it, it is offered to them; they are told that it is a religious act that the priests and all the Christians of the neighbourhood wish to perform and that it involves no expense. The Requiem Mass or the Absolution is given a commentary.

g. *The financial point of view.* — The financing of the parish is a difficult problem, all the more that the economic standard of the neighbourhood is very low. The services, baptism, marriage and burial, are not charged for. At the end of the church there is a box and the people give what they like. On the other hand, the Mass intentions are not given directly to the priests. Two or three times a week, a lay auxiliary holds the parochial secretariat for a few hours. She deals with financial questions: mass intentions for the dead, etc. She also takes note of difficult cases in the neighbourhood distinguishing between those where the priests must take prompt action and those which a social assistant can see to.

The basis of the financial organization is the voluntary contribution of the families. The men of Catholic Action regularly collect the monthly subscriptions which the families have promised, on the occasion of an earlier visit. These families promise very varying amounts; since the system has been installed, the financial situation of the parish is gradually improving.

Sunday collections have not been suppressed, but are taken at the Offertory in a liturgical manner. Two girls go round with baskets at that moment.

Each month the financial position of the parish is put up in the church porch, with the receipts and expenses shown. The priests have a common purse ; when they need money for their personal use, they ask for it.

### 3. *The Training of the Laity for the Apostolate.*

The priests in charge, conscious that parochial work, even organized in a missionary way, is not enough for evangelization in the modern world, have started training the laity for apostolic action in the various milieux of life. They were not able to begin at once, because they had to find militant Christians, able to undertake such work. Several attempts, especially the Y. C. W.,<sup>1</sup> came to nothing after a few weeks because there were not enough suitable persons.

However, after a few months of parochial action in the neighbourhood a certain number of young people, have been found, both boys and girls, who are able to go a step further and eventually to take responsibilities upon themselves with regard to their surroundings.

This was the origin of the Y. C. W. Catholic Action for adult workers does not yet exist in the Argentine, but it is hoped that it may begin shortly.

The younger children at school or at work already, are grouped according to various districts for the beginning of specialized action in the Young Y. C. W. or Y. C. S.<sup>2</sup> They are gradually directed to work in their surroundings : workshop, factory, school, and at the meetings their outlook on life is received in the light of faith.

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These few lines, too short to relate all the undertakings and the spirit in this parish of Buenos Aires, are enough to give an idea of the work being carried on there. Not all of it is original, but is not that encouraging ? Certain efforts are not dependent on local circumstances, as has been said of French pastoral experiments, but rather are representative of the conditions essential to parochial revival. If an experiment such as this has succeeded in a neighbourhood as dechristianized and poor as this one in Buenos Aires, it is certain that it can succeed in other parishes of the world, on condition that it is as systematically organized and carefully followed up.

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<sup>1</sup> Young Christian Workers.

<sup>2</sup> Young Christian Students.

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# An Essay in Liturgical Revival in a Secondary School

by Jean FRISQUE

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Authentic religious thought must be based on the actual life of the Church. In order to find out what place the liturgy, and especially the Mass, should hold in Christian life, it is useful to turn to facts. It is typical that, wherever a Christian community has really committed itself to the following of the Lord, the Mass has become the privileged centre of this committal, the active source of apostolic action.

The living experience with which we are here concerned took place at Lyons, in the setting of a secondary school for girls. To avoid misunderstanding, we must mention at once that this effort forms part of a revival which has been taking place in the Church in Lyons for some decades. Founded on the testimony of SS. Pothin and Irenaeus, the Church at Lyons has always held a privileged place in Catholicity, both on the missionary and the œcumenical planes. Perhaps what has been done there during the last decades represents a particularly significant effort. The interest lies in the genuineness of the undertakings and their scope. Many of the large city parishes have accomplished a very marked pastoral effort. The number of homes reached by the movement for the re-valuation of Christian life is considerable, the result being that each parish has at its disposal a very active Christian élite, ready to uphold any liturgical efforts.

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It was important to mention, at the beginning, that the experiment we are about to describe is part of the whole movement of the Christian life in Lyons, for the reader might otherwise be surprised that such marked results could have been obtained in so short a time. On the other hand, it must be noted that the bourgeois milieu from which the schoolgirls came was the least open of all to pastoral undertakings. On the one hand, this fact did not facilitate the work to be undertaken, but on the other, it showed how universal are the profound aspirations of the modern girl and how they are partly independent of any social group.

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### *Working Conditions and Initial Requirements.*

The liturgical state of the school before the revival was set on foot could be more or less described as follows: In the minds of the school authorities, the Mass was certainly the centre of the students' lives, but it was found that, especially since the war, a profound apathy existed with regard to the Mass, and it seemed impossible, therefore, to oblige the pupils to attend Mass daily. It had been decided to make one day a week only obligatory, which, as the authorities were well aware, merely set the problem aside. The pupils were bored a little less often, that was all. This boredom rose to such a pitch that supervision became necessary in order to avoid disorders. The priest who celebrated the Eucharist had no contact with the community in whose name he offered the sacrifice. He was finishing his studies and was pleased enough to have found a place where he could say his Mass... The courses in religious instruction were faithfully given, but had no reference to liturgical acts, nor to the actual life of the school and pupils. Other priests came to the school for confession at fixed hours: the older students hardly ever went to confession, for they saw nothing interesting in these routine acts. As for the other acts of religion, they filled the day, before and after study or class, but did not mean much... The Benedictions of the Blessed Sacrament had at least the advantage of occupying the pupils to a greater extent, because they were then singing. Once a year, at the beginning of the second term, a four-day retreat, usually excellent, stirred up consciences, caused resolutions to be made, but these resolutions, when they did not remain dead letters, only referred to the development of individual perfection.

A year after my arrival in this school, a series of circumstances arose causing the decision to be taken, in agreement with the Head

mistress, to make an attempt at producing something positive. We felt that this should begin with the Mass. If the girls were not attracted by the Mass, it was not impossible that the fault lay with us, at least in part. The modern girl is not of the same mind as her mother. She reacts to the authenticity of gestures and of behaviour in which the spiritual attitude can be discerned. She is not able to join in meaningless acts; if they are made a matter of obedience, she takes part in a sulky way, feeling deeply the emptiness of the effort required. And yet, the modern girl has a very great need for authentic actions, for without them she cannot achieve her personality. She needs to develop and assert her personality in order to be able to resist the many temptations to become the slave of the world which surrounds her, a fortiori in the midst of the bourgeois milieu which adds to these temptations the terrible one of security.

We were convinced, from the beginning, that we had much to learn. We must not, at any price, impose readymade pastoral formulae; we ourselves needed to enter more and more deeply into the understanding of the Eucharistic mystery, while we were living it with our pupils. An extremely active Theological Faculty, with parish priests, curates or chaplains commonly attending courses in dogma connected with the doctorate, and an excellent team of young priests enabled me to pursue this attempt at revival with the maximum guarantee as to the correctness of the direction taken. I must not forget to mention an essential point, the efficient help of the Cardinal Archbishop of Lyons, who never fails to back up his priests.

Before beginning our common effort — I wish to emphasize how close the collaboration always was between the school authorities and the priest, each providing the other with any information which might be lacking — we agreed on three points:

1. It would not be difficult to start a more frequent Mass attendance: three times a week. But it seemed essential to make the Mass optional, at least with regard to the third. It was obvious that, for the older girls, the fact of going willingly to Mass was the first step in a personal undertaking. We decided that the Mass should be fixed at 8.30 and that there should be study for those who did not go. It is clear that such a decision reinforced still more the adult nature of the proposed step.

2. In addition, the pupils ought to feel from the beginning that their headmistress and teachers were committed with them to the same spiritual quest. The Mass is not simply a matter for young

people : it constitutes the centre of the whole Christian life. One does not go to it for the sake of supervising, without oneself taking an active part. The headmistress decided to make this Mass her own, that is, to go to communion at it with her pupils. It was extremely necessary to avoid making miscalculations at the beginning : the pupils learnt of their headmistress' decision with great satisfaction.

3. Finally, it was necessary that the priest himself should take his part as priest. That seems obvious, and yet it must be admitted that it was something new. To be engaged as priest in the Eucharistic celebration, is to become aware of the responsibilities of a priest with regard to the community for which he celebrates. That is to say, not to celebrate Mass just anywhere where it is possible to find a place to say it, without thinking about the community behind the celebrant. If the priest is not aware of this, the community, especially when composed of young people, very soon is. Every priest is an unworthy servant, but for all that he is not interchangeable. A community should have its priest, an accessible one ; between the two there must be a dialogue, for if not, something essential is lacking from the start.

### *The Great Temptation.*

The great temptation which had to be avoided at any price — we gradually became aware of this — was to perform a real action, but one which was not the Mass. Young people love authenticity of action. Very well, give it to them, actions which do not ring false. They want to take a personal part. Make an appeal to their personality ! They are sensible to the values of communion. Very well, create an atmosphere of communion by hymns, communal actions, etc.

Now, all this may be reality, without being the Mass. There is even a certain probability that it will not be the Mass, because if it is true that young people are sensitive, as we have said, to the authenticity of actions and the value of communion, they have little sense of God. It is therefore not enough to respond to the aspirations of modern youth in order to be necessarily at the heart of the Christian mystery. I would say rather that it might easily be the contrary.

It soon became obvious to us that the above risk could be avoided in proportion as we neglected nothing to enter fully into the understanding of the Eucharistic act, as it is revealed by the fundamental actions and words which accompany them. The Ordinary of the Mass, and to a privileged degree, the Eucharistic prayer, very



soon became the permanent source of our revival. Without losing sight of the fact that this Eucharistic prayer only reveals itself to him who does not forget that it accompanies an action leading to a consecration, a breaking of bread and a communion.

*The Discovery of the Eucharistic Prayer.*

From the beginning of our attempt, I sought to celebrate as well as possible, endeavouring, as I made the gestures, to discover gradually their full meaning. Very early I understood that the prayers and gestures must be explained. Normally a liturgy should supply its own explanation. But the actual liturgy of the Mass remains hermetically sealed for most Christians today. Every day, I set myself to explain a point of the Mass. Not in order to burden the consciences of my faithful, but to deepen the unity of their spiritual commitment before God. The point of view which I made mine was not that of the objective analysis which classifies and defines: I wanted to rediscover the living 'genetics' of the Mass, to demonstrate the unique religious step which then takes place, in some sense creating itself, in the course of a development which had its crescendo and diminuendo, proceeding as by a spiral movement, at times drawing itself together and at other times dilating. The Eucharistic step defines the fundamental position of the Christian before God. Our being as Christians is there revealed in its complete simplicity.

The result of this first initiation was valuable. The essential parts of the Mass stood out clearly. After an entrance rite, there was a liturgy of the Word to which the priest's homily gave its full living and actual significance, and a Eucharistic liturgy of which the focal point was that great prayer from the preface to the Pater, developing ritually in a consecration-breaking of the Bread and communion. The community soon became aware that, in the Mass, everything was not of the same importance, that each prayer or each gesture had its function to fulfil in the whole. It was not enough that a prayer should be beautiful in order that, for that reason, one should be aware of it: everything depended upon its role in the Eucharistic drama. This is most important.

We distributed the Eucharistic prayer, being especially careful over its printing. We took care to make all the words expressing either the Eucharistic action or the subjects of the Eucharistic act stand out boldly. The text itself was presented in the form of a plan so that the 'structure' of the prayer should be clear. The whole was displayed on both sides of a quarto sheet which, folded in four,

gave a little booklet of eight pages, easy to slip into a missal. I dwell on this little pedagogic instrument, because it actually did us great service. When, later on, the religious instruction was reorganized, the Eucharistic prayer became in a sense the text at the base of our attempt at meditation. From the beginning I asked the pupils to take the text home and not to be afraid of underlining what they thought important, to ask for another if they wanted to. After some weeks, the Eucharistic prayer was studied in detail and considered in the unity of the step it implied. It is outside the scope of this article to tell what the applied intelligence of the Eucharistic prayer procured in the way of light on the essential of our Faith, but I can state that the Eucharistic prayer contains in itself all the essential points of the Christian religious act before the Father and that it offers an ideal starting point, guaranteed by the use which successive generations of Christians have made of it, for the spiritual commitment of the Christian in response to the advances of the Father.

When the priest announces the *Dominus vobiscum* of the Preface, all rise, conscious of the importance of what is going to be done. "Give thanks to the Father, our God:" the priest sums up what he is going to do in the name of the congregation. "It is just and right — it is our duty and our salvation — to render Thee thanks always and everywhere, Father." What all this meant, we had gradually to realize. We had to discover why this great prayer of thanksgiving, this Eucharistic prayer developed into a consecration, a breaking of bread and communion. On the other hand, it is the priest who says: "*We* give Thee thanks, Father." Who is '*We*?' Obviously it is a plural. History answers that this '*We*' is the clergy, the priests, and all those who, in one way or another, are ordained for the celebration. And the people present? They also are in this '*We*:' it is twice repeated: "*We*, Thy servants and with us Thy holy people." But when the priest is alone, as he does not say '*I*,' the '*We*' is he and his people: here then we read anew the Eucharistic prayer to discover in it the sense of the greater participation of the congregation with what the priest is doing. The laity do not usurp the sacerdotal function in any way. In the '*We*,' the priest has a place which is proper to him and the manifestation of which is very clear when, alone, he will repeat the "*Qui pridie quam pateretur.*"

All that had to be pointed out. The reader knows enough to realize in what direction we worked. It happened, on several occasions, that a pupil read aloud the Eucharistic prayer, with the exception of the consecration properly so-called. That was useful

to make the community aware of the deep meaning of the words of consecration. But of course it was only a temporary solution, soon discarded, in spite of the inconveniences of a Latin text pronounced by the priest. The lesser of two evils had to be chosen.

### *Confession and the Mass.*

A discovery which was soon made — it is even the first in chronological order — was the vital connection between the Mass and the Sacrament of Penance.

The community soon noticed the penitential note which occurs so frequently in the course of the Eucharistic celebration. It is as contrite sinners that we come to it, won over by a foreseeing love which turns into mercy to reach us in the state in which we are. We need not insist upon this penitential aspect. And yet what collective hypocrisy often goes with the successive recitation of the two Confiteors at the beginning of the Mass! This hypocrisy is removed when we realize that the Eucharistic act is linked to the particular penitential act which, in any case in the Latin Church, takes place in the 'avowal' kneeling before a priest who makes the gesture of absolution over us. It is certainly the ideal that the priest celebrating the Eucharist should be the one to give the absolution: by it the social aspect of the sacrament of penance, the reintegration into the Eucharistic community, is restored. And it is useful to explain to the faithful the need for jurisdiction in order to hear confessions, as this expresses the bond with the bishop, who presides over the Eucharist.

In order to stress this link with the Eucharist very clearly, I suggested, from the beginning, that there should be confessions before Mass, from time to time. For this purpose I was in the chapel every day fifteen to twenty minutes before the celebration. At first a certain amount of shyness had to be overcome, but the habit was soon formed. The effect upon the attitude of the community was marked. It became increasingly conscious of its personality, and the weekly confessions on Wednesday afternoons also benefited; they became much more alive, thanks to the link, now apparent, with the Mass, and soon, with the whole of life. Certainly, the priest had to be extremely exacting; it was a difficult task to bring a group of girls of between 15 and 17 to realize the significance of a personal penitential attitude before the priest who celebrates the Eucharist, of him who is their priest and knows them *nominatim*. But, it is characteristic of modern youth not to refuse a commitment which has an element of violence in it.

*The Link between Mass and Life.*

One temptation to be guarded against was that of making the Mass into a self-sufficient whole, without linking it with life. This temptation was all the greater because we were dealing with a community of girls who are prone to enthusiasms. But time soon calmed them down and the serious work began. The place of the Mass in daily life had to be marked out.

The daily school and home lives of girls is somewhat monotonous, at any rate in appearance. But, when looked at closely, each day has its quota of originality. And it is not hard, in a school, or in a form, to discover the particular efforts which the day will call for, the temptations to be avoided, etc. After a while, it is possible to point out, in the course of the homily, for instance, the link with the day.

But we must avoid presenting Mass or Communion as the help, the 'strength' which those participating need to carry out their duties of state in a proper manner. We run the risk of causing young people who have not a natural sense of God to believe that the Lord is at their service to set right the failings of a purely human conduct which leads to no result. There is a risk of Christianity being absorbed into a moral system with a religious veneer. Besides, the girl will say in discouragement: "The Mass is no good, it does not change my life." At once the answer must be that, truly, the Mass 'serves' no purpose, because God does not 'serve' any purpose. Grace does not compromise with our human efforts, but has its own place: transposed onto the plane of moral behaviour, it means an 'exigency,' a "never failing source" of initiatives, of new beginnings. It does not help the girl who has not worked, or who has not the capacity, to pass her examination!

The Mass is in the centre of life, because what is fully achieved in it is what has to be done at each moment of our life. We have to give thanks, always and everywhere, for the wonders which the Father does not cease to do for His people and for each of us in particular. We can only give thanks, that is to say, consent to the final significance of things and persons around us, which bring us the token of God's primary love, by taking our stand on Christ. We do this chiefly in the Eucharist in which we attain personal union with Him. But "giving thanks always and in all places" is performed in daily life. The heart of the Christian endeavour is to consent to that permanent act on the part of the Father Who, in each event of life, surrounds us with His protecting love, even when that love seems terribly silent to us. To give thanks is to



take God as our definite starting point, our ' rock, ' to accept poverty, in the biblical meaning of the word, to refuse the temptation of wealth, the temptation of monopoly.

As our effort continued, we felt that therein lay our role as educators, and for me especially my role as priest. What a difficult one it was ! We had to make our pupils understand that what they did at Mass they had to do always ; that what they did at Mass had no meaning except with regard to what they did in the course of the day, and vice versa. The essence of training for life as Christians lay in this. If most of our pupils found the Mass distasteful too often, it was because they did not realize its living meaning, and we could not hold them responsible for their ignorance.

Before continuing, two facts ought to be emphasized. During a whole year, the Mass became the centre, the pivot of all the School festivities. For the headmistress' feast, we composed a play recalling the bearing of the Mass on life, and giving a birds' eye view of the Old Testament preparation and the New Testament realization of the spiritual attitude which the Mass implies. Another event was the Mass on the day of the prize-giving. It took place after the prize distribution : this simple rearrangement gave each event its true significance. At the offertory, besides the bread to be consecrated, each class " gave up " their laurels... and at the *Ita missa est*, each class received the list of the spiritual instructions for the holidays — we shall refer to these later.

### *The Mass and the Mystery of Mary.*

Devotion to Our Lady had always held an important place in the religious life of the school. The feast of the Immaculate Conception for example, was a peak : as a matter of fact, the whole town of Lyons celebrates it in a special manner.

And yet the real mystery of Our Lady seemed to us to be far from the thoughts of our young people. Our placing her at the side of Christ, gave them a tiresome impression of encumbrance. We felt that they would not accept Our Lady in their lives without knowing the itinerary which would lead to her and which could not be the same as that conducting them to the Father... Because, in both cases, the word ' prayer ' is used, the impression is given that the Christian approach to Our Lady is the same as the way to the Father. We were therefore obliged to effect a sort of distinction between the qualities of the Father of Jesus Christ and of our Heavenly Mother.

Again the living experience of the Eucharistic prayer helped us

to place Our Lady in her proper position in the spiritual universe of our pupils. "United in the same communion, and venerating the memory of Mary, the Mother of Christ our Lord..." In the spiritual act which leads to the Father, Mary is on our side, united with us in one communion, with us taking her stand on the Only Son incarnate, in Whom we can all together say 'Father.' In the *Communicantes* it is said also that it is our privilege to be united in one communion with Our Lady. Why this privilege if not because Mary is she who, more than all, gives thanks to the Father always and everywhere for the marvels which the Father has done for her "in the lowliness of His handmaid!" Mary is the Poor of the Beatitudes, keeping nothing for herself, her whole being a Eucharist, a living thanksgiving. Because she was the first and foremost of the lowly, she was called to be Mother of Christ and our Mother. For this reason her power of communion with us and intercession for us is truly the highest, and that is why she occupies such a preponderant place in our lives in the communion of saints which is the House of God.

Devotion to Our Lady, or rather, the live understanding of the mystery of Mary, grows in proportion to the live understanding of the mystery of the Eucharist. It does not consist in adding new prayers, recited "to give her pleasure," but which remain dead letters in our spiritual consciousness. We cannot encounter Mary without being drawn to new purifications; she can never fail to lead us nearer to the Father.

### *The Liturgy of the Word.*

We have not yet spoken of the Liturgy of the Word. As a matter of fact, during the first year of our experiment, it was not one of our chief concerns. Certainly there was a homily given at each celebration, but this was chiefly for the purpose of explaining the eucharistic liturgy, except when the texts given out led naturally to practical conclusions for school life.

As however we entered more deeply into the understanding of the Eucharistic liturgy, our eyes opened and a new light was shed on the Word of God, as it is presented in the first part of the Mass. This was certainly not astonishing. It is obvious that a development in the spiritual attitude of faith, hope and charity leads increasingly to the better understanding of the Word of God.

But, reciprocally, the discovery of the liturgy of the Word considerably enriched the 'eucharistic' attitude, enabling it to be displayed in the most various circumstances of life. The reading of the

Epistle and Gospel, as well as the psalmody of the Introit, the Gradual and the Alleluia, engendered a greater 'knowledge' of the Father and the marvels which He does not cease to do for His people. The priest's homily must enter progressively into the mystery of the powerful proclamation of the living Word of God.

Quite naturally our praying community made the discovery that it had a bishop, its own bishop, the bishop of Lyons. This discovery could originally have been made from the eucharistic liturgy which the bishop presides over, or the priest replacing him. In fact, the personal discovery of the bishop took place in the liturgy of the Word. As we know, it is in the liturgy that the bishop chiefly exercises his privilege of teaching the Word. The Word is proclaimed to us by him. He is the privileged reader of the Scriptures: in any case, it is he who normally gives the homily, thus transposing the Word of God into a living message for his people.

It must be admitted that most Christian communities are still far from making this discovery. Scripture, for many, is made up of the passages which the Church sets before us and in which we have to look for rules of religious or moral behaviour. The biblical movement of the last years has undoubtedly made Christians understand that the Scripture is first the living Word of God, which we must welcome in us and which alone can convert us. But I fear, for my part, that it has developed too much outside a parallel discovery of the mystery of the bishop. It is rightly said that biblical reading is a communal exercise, devolving on the Church. But does a gathering of Christians make a Church? Is not the Church always a convocation before being an assembly? And who convokes it but the bishop? Who makes the Word live if not the bishop? Who then has the prerogative of giving forth the Word of God? Is it not the bishop or his representative who presides over the liturgy of the Word?

In our community this discovery of the mystery of the bishop came about naturally. He was present in a sense at each celebration. If he had actually been present in the flesh, it would have been enough for the priest to disappear, and nothing would have been different. The Bible was discovered as a Word that is only living because the Church announces it, because the priest announces it. The Word is first to be received in the heart, as a deposit which penetrates ever more deeply into us. The essential is not that it be understood first, but that it be received in faith. Certainly, the catechetical element should not be neglected, but it was essential that the truly kerygmatic aspect should never be lacking. And from that moment, the priest's homily took a definite direction. It was the

living commentary of the sacred text which had just been announced, but this commentary often took the form of a ' proclamation in power ' and developed in a double reference, to the key texts of the Scripture on the one hand and on the other, to actual life.

The discovery of the mystery of the bishop was the starting point of a deeper one, that of the true catholicity of the Church, and consequently of the missionary aspect of the spiritual commitment. This development proved its worth. Communion of solidarity with all men is not ours to give. It is ' given ' us from above. The call to salvation, made by the Father in Jesus Christ, has necessarily a universal bearing. Responding to it, we respond to a foreseeing initiative on the part of the Father Who, in different ways, unites us in a brotherhood which is as large as the universe. This call to salvation which the bishop brings to his people, rests on his communion with other bishops, and we know that the corner stone of this communion is the Roman Pontiff.

An exciting discovery if ever there was one ! Life within the Church shows itself to be an " interchange of life and energy. " And, as in all parts of the world there are local churches not yet arrived at majority, the whole Church is found to be in a missionary state in their regard. The missionary aspect of the life of our little community arose quite naturally from this awareness of the anguish of the Christian who realizes how much the Church is still western in its attire, how little it yet carries on that dialogue of charity by which the mystery of the Church arrived at its majority is defined. An anguish which, in the Christian conscience, determines an action which bears in itself the weight of catholicity, a missionary action.

When the daily and ' private ' reading of the Scripture became a habit, the reference to the liturgy of the Word was never lacking. We never felt ourselves to be alone in this private reading ; we were the respondents to a sovereign initiative of the Father Who, in Christ and through the ministry of the bishop, gave us brothers in the Faith.

Again the Scriptures, and especially the Psalms, further replenished the springs of the religious revival itself. We introduced the singing of the Psalms in French, as soon as they were published. But it seemed necessary to carry on an effort of personal research in the evenings, taking the Psalms as the starting point ; definite questionnaires were drawn up to make it possible to continue the experiment during the holidays (they were sent out every fortnight).

#### *Reconstruction of the Religious Course.*

From the beginning of the second experimental year, a general



reconstruction of the course in religion became necessary. I am speaking of that given to the elder girls. Up to then the religious instruction has mostly been limited to objective material and religious facts. Little attention was paid to leading up to an effective conversion. Doubtless a course of study is a course, and cannot be transformed into an exercise of spiritual direction in common. But authentic religious thought, especially adapted to our contemporaries, should not be content to provide points of doctrine, analyse the 'objects' of our faith, then to make a synthesis of them. Is not its function rather to take its stand on the effective life of the Church and of every Christian in order to bring this life to maturity, to the realization of its commitments in a way no longer infantile? True religious thought only begins once the operation of clearing away the 'facts' is accomplished. Thought is not life, and the two must not be confused, but thought makes life more adult.

This kind of meditation on religious matters is seldom suggested to our schoolchildren, and the consequence is this paradoxical phenomenon: boys and girls, juggling with religion as though it were mathematics, and completely childish in what concerns their commitments in life. No link has been formed between religious lessons and their lives.

Thus the direction of our itinerary led us to reconstruct the religious instruction. Our starting point was the Mass. The Mass is not meditation, it is life, the Church's life in its culminating point. But we felt sure that without reflection we should not succeed in our attempt to achieve a better understanding of the Eucharistic mystery. And, the purpose of this reflection was not to provide us with ready-made notions as to the Mass, or theories about it. No, it would have to take as its pivot the Eucharistic act itself, as it is performed in the celebration by words and actions, in order to discover the internal unity, the wealth of its development. The Eucharistic act would then become the centre of a general meditation on the mystery of the Church, as the Family of the Father, the Body of Christ, and the social structure. For example, when we know that each time St. Paul speaks of the 'body' of Christ, he always refers, at least implicitly, to the Eucharistic liturgy, we simply followed in his steps by proceeding as we did. Reflection on the respective positions of the priest and the laity in the Church would take on a particular meaning for our pupils, knowing as they did that they entered, with the priest, in a way which had to be defined, in the formation of the 'we,' the subject of the Eucharistic prayer. And so on.

Materially speaking, the course of religious instruction was given in two stages. One course a week by the priest (this was stencilled), and recapitulated by the form mistress, in study circles.

*Effects on the Studies.*

We must now say a word about an unexpected development which soon accompanied the effort undertaken upon the religious plane. This concerned particularly the higher forms, from the third to the philosophy. Our pupils ceased to be childish with regard to religion and as time went on we had adult minds to deal with. But this kind of conversion quite naturally entailed an almost entire reversal in the very style of the organization of the secular training and education. Adults with regard to spiritual things, our girls felt deeply the need to be so on the purely human plane. The headmistress became acutely aware of this, and soon an entirely new spirit pervaded the organization of the lessons for the older girls. Most of these were given in the mornings, the afternoons serving as time for personal work under the supervision of the masters. The study room no longer had an impersonal, lifeless, unoriginal, air about it. If we were to give details here, we should go beyond the scope of this article, but in itself the thing seemed to us to be so significant of the direction which we had taken that it deserved to be mentioned. On its own level it is a guarantee of the authenticity of our effort. For the links between natural and supernatural are such that it seems to be impossible to conceive a true revival in religious formation without a heart-searching with regard to the simply human formation itself.

*Conclusion.*

We are now at the end ; we could add much, give more light and shade. I could have said something about the details of the celebration of the Mass, but I purposely have not. Initiatives in details look like subterfuges when they are divorced from the revival as a whole. Revival is necessarily different for every community ; only the principles remain the same for all. Each community must start its effort at the point at which it finds itself, and it is utopian to want to find another.

The account of this little experiment at Lyons does not pretend to be anything but a testimony and a suggestion for some elements in a programme.

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# A Way of the Cross for the Pupils of a Trade School

by BROTHER MÉMOIRE-MICHEL, F. S. C.,  
*Teacher at the École Saint-Luc, Tournai*<sup>1</sup>

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Each year on the last day of the second term, a Way of the Cross is organized on the school premises.

This is done with several aims in view :

1. To put the boys in the presence of God in the midst of their work.
2. To cultivate and enrich their faith.
3. To make them aware of their responsibilities as baptized, of the greatness of their profession which makes them sharers in the work of Creation, and in the Redemption, and thus enables them to construct a happier because a truer world.

*Foyer Notre-Dame* (April 1955) provided the general theme : “ Like Christ, the Church is still on Calvary. ” Each station was given the name of a persecuted country, and it was, sad to say, not difficult to find fourteen of these. Thus another result was obtained : that of making the boys share in the life of the whole Church and become more ‘ Catholic. ’

There was no need to fear monotony in the stations. We must mention that the school contains several sections which share as best they can the parts of the buildings left standing by the bombs. Each section had two stations to prepare, and the two groups of Catholic Action made up the series.

The hymns sung by a group of pupils were chosen from the

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<sup>1</sup> The “ Paraliturgy ” here described was performed at the École Saint-Luc, Tournai. It is run by the Brothers of the Christian Schools and has sections for Architecture, Decorative Arts, Sculpture, Cabinet-making, Typography and Printing. — Address : 23, rue du Chambge, Tournai, BELGIUM.

Psalms of Fr. Gelineau. Each pupil had a printed leaflet with the prayers said in common.<sup>1</sup>

At the appointed time the pupils gathered round the first Station. Two pupils from the Woodcraft section carried the rustic cross. Behind it followed the choir and the rest of the procession.

When all were at their places, a pupil from the section to which the Station belonged announced the First Station.

The choir sang a hymn.

The Chaplain gave a commentary on the station, ending with the first sentence of the leaflet which all said together :

Example :

*The Priest:* Lord, in our lives we will have the same strength as You have.

*All:* Lord, in our lives we will have the same strength as You have. Give us strength and courage in a world which is often hostile to duty ; give us a love of honesty and truth ; may we fight against all evil, like You, with simple and calm strength.

The passage from one Station to another is accompanied by appropriate soft music diffused by loud-speakers placed at intervals.

The same procedure is enacted at each Station.

The ornamentation of the different Stations is left to the free initiative and taste of the pupils, for it is their Way of the Cross.

Two details will serve to illustrate what has been described :

— The Cabinet-making class set up a large crucifix which they were restoring ;

— The Jecists set up the shield belonging to their Movement.

The 12th, 13th and 14th Stations were in the same place and a large bare cross was put up. The crucifix which had been carried during the ceremony was fixed to this cross at the beginning of the 12th Station.

At the end of the ceremony the choir sang a hymn in parts followed by Gelineau's Magnificat.

The accompanying photographs will give an idea of the atmosphere in which the pupils followed this Way of the Cross.

We also join to this account the text which was used by the pupils, as mentioned above. It is to the point and within the grasp of all.

In conclusion, we think we may say that our boys were pleased with this Way of the Cross.

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<sup>1</sup> The words were written by the Rev. G. Delvigne, O. P., chaplain and master at the École Saint-Luc.



The enlightening commentaries, the good singing, the suitable prayers and the active share which they had in the preparations, all contributed largely to this result.

No better illustration of the preceding remarks can be given than the judgment of a boy of 18 : “ I was very pleased with it. I had never realized as well as I did today how, just by my work, I could help Christ in the work of redeeming others. ”

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## VIA CRUCIS

1. CONDEMNATION. — *Christ accepts it calmly, as the workman accepts his work. He knows that He stands in the truth.*

Lord — we shall have in our lives — the same strength as You had. Give us strength and courage — in a world which is often hostile to duty ; — give us a love of honesty and truth ; — may we fight against all evil — like You — with a simple and tranquil strength.

2. THE CROSS. — *The instrument of Christ's work : He respects it and loves it faithfully.*

Lord — we will be faithful to duty — like You. Give us a love of our work — a respect and regard for the tools of that work — they are worthy of respect — but are sometimes tiring like Your cross ; — may we always make use of them — with courage, with pride — and joyfully.

3. THE FIRST FALL. — *The fatigue and monotony of work.*

Lord — like You we shall have — times when life is too hard.

May we not give up the task — because the fatigue is great — because the working hours are long — because they are monotonous — because we have worries and pain — because life is not always easy and happy.

4. THE MEETING WITH OUR LADY. — *Co-redemptrix, she has a sense of her responsibility.*

Lord — like Your Mother, we will be — conscious of our responsibilities. Help us to work conscientiously — thinking of those who are dependent on us — particularly our family.

We know the worth of our calling ; — through it, truth or lies — are diffused in the world ; — may Our Lady help us — as she helped You — to realize the honour of our work.

5. SIMON OF CYRENE. — *Fraternal help.*

Lord — we will have the charity — of Simon of Cyrene.

Make us brotherly — give us hearts to help — those who are in pain and distress ; — make us — see in our trade — not only a way of earning our bread — but a service ; — make us understand — its social and Christian value.

6. VERONICA. — *Compassion — Christ's Face reproduced.*

Lord — we admire Veronica.

Make us meet — in our lives — a companion like her — faithful and good — who will help us and love us — who will be our support in hard times. May we in our work — have the honour to express — what is true, just — and useful for our human brethren — as Your Face was imprinted — on Veronica's veil.

7. THE SECOND FALL. — *Doubt and weakness : but Christ rises and goes on.*

Lord — we will have Your strength.

Help us — when the time of doubt and weakness comes — when we are tempted to discouragement ; — to have then like You — an unbreakable will — and the same faith in our value and our dignity.

8. THE WOMEN OF JERUSALEM. — *They only know how to lament ; Christ gives them a lesson.*

Lord — we understand — this lesson of energy.

Make us — not to groan over our difficulties — but to act and react with vigour — always to keep alive our constancy in action — to create a happier and more Christian life — may we — never be disappointed — in the trade we have chosen — and which is our vocation ; — always to be proud of it — and to exercise it with generosity.

9. THE THIRD FALL. — *Depression, the danger of not going on to the end ; the finished work.*

Lord — like You, we admire, — work well done. Make us — go on to the end of our task — learn our trade perfectly — fully realize what we have intended to do — love the beauty of finished work.

10. THE STRIPPING. — *Poverty.*

Lord — we look with respect — on Your stripping. Make us — have a deep respect — for the poor and unfortunate — those who have had no luck — the poor whom You resemble in this moment.

May our profession — give us what is necessary for our wellbeing — what You want for us. — But let not this wellbeing make us selfish. May we never forget the unfortunate — who look for our help.

11. JESUS NAILED ON THE CROSS. — *Suffering; the vile work of the executioners.*

Lord — we feel Your pain.

May we — never do anyone harm — respect the life and happiness of others.

May our tools never be — like those nails which caused You so much pain. — May they never serve — vile purposes — or destroy what is good. Lord, make us — respect our profession and its honour.

12. THE CRUCIFIXION. — *The Redemption, mystery of life and death.*

Lord — we know what this is — the great Christian mystery.

Make us believe — in this mystery of death and life — which You began on the cross — and are continuing in us. — We believe — that life is stronger than death — good stronger than evil — grace stronger than our weakness — joy stronger than pain. — Give us faith — give us Your victory.

13. JESUS TAKEN DOWN FROM THE CROSS. — *The compassionate affection of those who took Him down.*

Lord — we feel the love of — those who are round You at this moment.

May we — in the fatigue of our labours — and in our times of rest — have good comrades — sure friends — honest and humane masters — a devoted family; — may their support — and their faithful friendship — may never be lacking to us — especially when we need — comfort and help.

14. THE LAYING IN THE TOMB. — *The apparent sadness of the burial, while in reality, the resurrection has already taken place.*

Lord — we believe in Your resurrection.

May we — not be deceived — by the sadness of the world — give us joy — give us abundant and courageous joy — give us hope — give us life. May we be for others — a cause of life and joy.

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# Singing during Divine Worship

by Joseph KELLNER, S. J.,

*Institute for Mission Apologetics, Manila*<sup>1</sup>

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Singing during divine worship, as St. Pius X has said, is an integral part of solemn liturgy and therefore shares in the dignity and value of the liturgy itself. The more the liturgical movement becomes aware of the pastoral and missionary needs, the more it becomes attentive to sacred singing. We may quote some wellknown facts. In his encyclical *Mediator Dei*, Pius XII expresses the ardent wish to see popular religious singing encouraged, and not only the gregorian plain chant which the *Motu proprio* of St. Pius X revived. On the occasion of the International Liturgical Congress held at Lugano (Switzerland) in September 1953, His Excellency Mgr Wilhelm Weskamm, bishop of Berlin, laid down this great principle : " I do not believe in an active and pious participation in the celebration of the Mass if the congregation does not sing. " <sup>2</sup> At the International Congress of Church music which took place at Vienna in the autumn of 1954, a detailed speech on " Liturgy and popular singing " was given, not by a musician, but by a learned liturgist, J. A. Jungmann, S. J., the author of *Missarum Solemnia*.

These facts — which could easily be multiplied — and the lively interest which communal religious singing has aroused suggest that there exists between the pastoral-missionary aims of the present liturgical movement and Church singing a close connection, that is to say, that religious singing, especially by the congregation, contains a value of which a living liturgy cannot afford to deprive itself. These values are, it seems to us, to be looked for in three directions : from above to below, from God to men : evangelistic values; from below to above, from men to God : values for prayer ; from man to man within the human community : communal values.

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<sup>1</sup> Address : Institute for Mission Apologetics, P. O. Box 1815, Manila, PHILIPPINES (Editor's note).

<sup>2</sup> *Liturgisches Jahrbuch*, III (1953), p. 179.



## I. EVANGELISTIC VALUES OF RELIGIOUS SINGING

The Good News of our salvation in Christ comes to men through many ways ; after the announcement properly so-called, the sermon, catechesis, religious instruction, one of the chief is in singing, especially congregational singing. Merely to look at the diocesan hymn books will convince us of this. The hymns for the liturgical seasons as well as for the Mass are given an important place ; in other words, the essential events and fundamental truths of our life of faith and charity are ceaselessly recalled to the faithful in the Church hymns : the Incarnation, Passion, Death and Glorification of our Saviour ; our need for salvation, for our being raised up in order to get rid of sin and weakness and tend to greater holiness and resemblance to Christ ; the central importance of the sacrifice of our altars, the renewal of the sacrifice of redemption in and by the Church. Each year the hymns set these primordial truths before our minds to be meditated upon. Let us see how this is done.

Often our hymns simply reflect the gospel narratives of the Birth, Passion and Resurrection and Ascension of the Saviour or are a commentary on a Scripture saying, such as Isaiah's words (XI, 1) on the subject of the shoot from the Tree of Jesse, *Flos de radice Jesse* (Es ist ein Ros'entsprungen).

Other hymns announce the Good News by translating literally or freely the Latin hymns of the liturgy such as the *Creator Alme Siderum* (the hymn for Vespers in Advent), the *Vexilla Regis prodeunt* (Vespers hymn in Passiontide), the *Lauda Sion Salvatorem* (Sequence for Corpus Christi) and others besides. In this way the depth and dogmatic fulness which is rightly attributed to these hymns becomes accessible to the faithful, and if it were not so, a treasure would be hidden away from all those who did not take part in the canonical hours. Also these hymns are to be found in greater or less number in most of the hymn books of the Church ; they have even found a place in the small organ recital book by Sebastian Bach.

The evangelistic value of the sacred hymns is increased by the poetic language which they use ; they gain in brilliance and power. The scientifically trained theologian may be pleased by the clear notions they contain, their definitions and arguments. The major

urity of the people need something else : for them, the religious truths mainly draw their life and importance from their oral form. It is only the poet who finds the exact expression, the striking picture and comparison which, setting the truth in its right light, illuminate and satisfy man. A canticle speaks to the mind and heart, not by provoking a facile sensation of pleasure, but by addressing the whole man. In Revelation, God did not disdain the use of poetic language in the Psalms of David, Solomon's sayings and many of the prophets' discourses. The very parables of the Word made Man bear witness to an incomparable power over words. So our hymns, when they are good poetry, are like prophets of the New Testament, messengers of God, heralds of the Good News. The belief and knowledge of Christians on the subject of the Mother of the Saviour, for instance, is perhaps more nourished by communal singing than by preaching or books on Our Lady.

The poetical word receives a new dimension from *music*. Music itself possesses an excellent evangelistic value. When Hector Berlioz, in the *Dies Irae* of his great *Requiem* evokes the impossibility of escaping the Last Judgment (the great orchestra is then supported by four distant orchestras), when Anton Bruckner in *Et incarnatus* of his Mass in F flat describes the chaste mystery of the Incarnation, when Wolfgang Emédée Mozart in his *Ave verum corpus* makes us bend the knee before the Eucharistic Body of the Lord, or also when the gregorian choral in the antiphon *In paradisum* of the liturgy of the dead makes us feel the glory of a Christian death and in the *Crucem tuam* of the adoration of the cross, the first rays of the Easter faith appear — we have kerygma, the announcement of the Good News in the true sense of the word. There the mysteries of the Faith take hold of us in a concrete, living, clear and experimental fashion. The sincere soul of the simple Christian draws from it the essence of the truth of revelation.

The sung kerygmatics of the Church's hymns has another value in the deep impression which it produces, an impression due not only to the poetic language and the musical form, but also to *repetition*. The same sermon, however beautiful, can never be repeated before the same congregation, but a hymn can be repeated continually, and always exerts the same charm. We must admit that the kerygmatic value of different hymn books is very variable. Some old-fashioned collections contain a series of insipidities ; poor in substantial canticles, in hymns for general use, expressing praise, gratitude and trust towards the Heavenly Father ; they hardly recall to us our sanctifying union with Christ, our divine filiation, give little inkling of the profound meaning of the Mass as the

sacrifice of the Church. Some of these collections contain, perhaps, too many hymns in honour of Our Lady and favourite saints ; or again those concerning the sacraments have too much reference to the worship of the Holy Eucharist. All that may be justified. It is also, however, a fact that the new editions of diocesan hymn books show a real progress from every point of view and one receives this impression on looking at the diocesan hymn books which have appeared in German-speaking countries during the last ten years. Similar progress can be noted also where the liturgical revival has already borne fruit.

The psalms are now being used to a much greater extent and are arousing much interest among the faithful. They are of the very highest evangelistic value, for they contain the power and grandeur of the revealed word of God. Twenty years ago they were unknown to the average Christian in many countries, or only sung by the clergy at Solemn Vespers, but now they are becoming familiar to the people. In the French-speaking countries the musical notation of the psalms by J. Gelineau, S. J., has been extraordinarily popular ; in the United States the initiative and publications of St. John's Abbey, Collegeville, Minnesota, which, following the example of the Latin liturgy, make great use of the psalms, is reaching ever widening circles ; in German-speaking countries, during the last seven years, more than 20 diocesan hymn books have been republished and almost all of them include psalms for the use of the faithful, which formerly was a much rarer occurrence. Even in China, the faithful are not ignorant of them ; melodies composed for them by the Chinese musician Tchang Wen Ye are sung especially in the towns and by students (as far as is possible to-day). And what a wealth of doctrine they possess ! What a majestic picture of God they present to the open mind ! The Creator, the Most Holy, the Judge and the Avenger ; then the God of mercy and Shepherd of our souls, and all the time, behind the allusive terms, are prophetic visions, the picture of the Messiah to come, the Saviour and the Servant of God on the wood of the cross ! How the soul feels itself drawn to trust and gratitude to humble supplications and sincere repentance ! Therein lies its true nourishment. We hope that the hearts of those who sing them will open to the values of Revelation in song.

It is true that, even the inspired songs of David and other hymns, may be sung listlessly and without attention, but preaching can easily remedy this if, coming occasionally to their help, it explains their meaning in the form of a homily or commentary. In return, the hymns can be a *source of inspiration for the preacher* — and that

is the evangelistic value which remains for us to deal with. Hymns can furnish preaching with formulae, fortunate expressions, sometimes even the scheme for a spiritual exhortation. Could the tremendous redemptive love of Christ be better rendered than by the immortal verses of the hymn for Corpus Christi, *Verbum supernum* :

*Se nascens dedit socium,  
Convalescens in edulium,  
Se moriens in pretium,  
Se regnans dat in praemium.*

This verse could serve as the base for a series of sermons. Another series during the time of Advent could be inspired by the hymn *Creator alme siderum*, dealing with the following subjects: 1st verse: our need of salvation; verse 2: Our salvation in Christ; verse 3: His coming in the flesh; verse 4: His coming between the Ascension and the parousia; verse 5: His coming at the Last Judgment. Other hymns lend themselves to similar developments. In this way they can animate, enrich and render fruitful our preaching.

## II. THE PRAYER VALUE OF HYMN SINGING

More important than the evangelistic value is that of prayer in Church singing. Singing in public worship is *intensified prayer*, a joyous, resonant, uplifting of the soul to God, a lyrical meditation on divine things... in a high artistic form.<sup>1</sup>

All the beauty and greatness of prayer is there in a high degree. For to sing is to pray affectively. When a thought, an impression, takes complete hold of us, when a sentiment penetrates us, we are urged to express exteriorly what is surging within us. The proverb says "Out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaketh." A great enthusiasm, a profound joy, an ardent desire, a great disappointment, a passionate love, set us in a state of interior tension which has to find an outlet and does so chiefly in singing. Singing is often a spontaneous expression of the overflowing soul, an effusion of the heart, like laughing and crying. In a song we are able to say things inexpressible by other means.

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<sup>1</sup> J. A. JUNGMAHN, S. J., *Catéchèse*, Brussels, Ed. *Lumen Vitae*, 1955, p. 188.



Singing, however, does not let the waves of interior emotion throw down all the dykes, for to sing is to *pray within rules*. The fixed words, the prescribed melody, form an efficient barrier against unbridled personal effusions ; they become a means of expression for those who shrink from revealing their interior life ; and they will make an empty and insensible soul vibrate, for it is a prayer which inflames and brings to life. This is why the Church likes to place her hymns at the beginning of her services : the Introit of the Mass, the Invitatory to the canonical hours, set our souls going, when, abandoning the vanity and distractions of the world, they come into the presence of God ; they open them to God and divine things ; they create the atmosphere which brings God near to us. This vivifying function is amplified in the setting of a determined programme ; the good execution of the ceremonies requires that the hymns to be sung should be fixed beforehand, and the ideas and sentiments which are to be aroused. In this way it is possible to influence that affective element in man which is so apt to be intractable to exterior pressure.

Finally, the hymn is an *active prayer*, active in the sense that we participate by our action in the religious event, but also in a deeper sense : by singing we enter into a living and practical contact with the mysteries of our faith. In singing, we pay homage, with the shepherds and the Magi, to the Infant in the manger and offer Him our spiritual sacrifice ; by singing we humble ourselves as sinners and live our own resurrection to a new life with the glorified Lord ; by singing, Christ and His redemption become present and living to us. The encyclical *Mediator Dei* tells us : “ He (Christ) is present in the praise and supplications which we address to God, according to these words : There where two or three are gathered together in My name, I am in the midst of them. ”<sup>1</sup> In us, by the hymn on our lips, Christ praises the Father Who is in Heaven and intercedes by “ ineffable groanings ” (*Rom.*, VIII, 26). We can apply to hymn-singing what Fr. Sertillanges says of religious music in general : “ Religious music is not an accessory nor an exterior embellishment ; it is the very life of prayer taking on its complete form ; it is linked with the words as the word is to the thought, the thought to the soul and the soul to the Holy Spirit. ”<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> *A. A. S.*, XXXIX (1947), p. 528.

<sup>2</sup> See G. LEBACQZ, S. J., *Religious music and religious formation*, in *Lumen Vitae*, vol. VI (1951), 3, p. 480.

### III. COMMUNAL VALUES OF HYMN SINGING

Hymn singing is to a great extent singing in common, actually, the *singing of the united community*. Even when executed by the schola or the choir it refers to the whole congregation, whose place is taken by the group of singers. The communal values of the singing are manifested above all when all the faithful present mingle their voices. How liberating is this singing together ! By this hymn rising to Heaven from every mouth, we feel that in this place, at this moment, there are not only grouped around the altar separate units, but a real US, a community intimately united in faith, love, effort and thought. Here Me and You contact each other, find each other, communicate, speak together of the Heavenly Father and to Him. The living spark springs from one to the other and kindles the sacred fire, from soul to soul, heart to heart. Singing is contagious, it draws us all in its wake, brings us together, transforms the mass into a real society. We continually experience this in the pilgrimages to Rome, Lourdes, Fatima... Coldness, egoism, self-centredness and vanity which make us look with superiority on our neighbours and criticize them disappear ; in them we recognize a brother loved by Christ as we are, redeemed with us. His Excellency Mgr Weskamm has some wonderful words on this subject. " Sacred hymns, " he says, " which represent a valuable element in our religious life, play a very special role in all forms of communal worship. I do not know how one could lead a community to active participation and common action, if there were no singing. But I am speaking of that singing which springs from the most intimate depths, where the soul finds contact with God, of that singing in which the believer expresses in a sensible manner his sentiments and deepest and most authentic impulses. Such singing brings an essential contribution to the formation of the community. Indeed, it joins two aspects : it expresses the intimacy of each and it realizes the community of all. That is why singing develops worship in depth and extends its perspectives ; it has therefore great importance, precisely with regard to the inmost thoughts as well as to active participation. " <sup>1</sup>

Singing is one of the most important activities of religious socie-

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<sup>1</sup> *La Maison-Dieu*, 1954, n° 37, pp. 30-31.

ty ; thanks to its power of suggestion and attraction, it *strengthens and enthuses the community*, breathes life and strength into it, can even weld into a real society a multiplicity of men, " build them up " in the best sense of the word.

This shows the importance of singing where the Christian community, the Church, is being formed in mission countries. It must replace in many ways the religious atmosphere which is absent, the charm of religious customs and feasts, which transfigure, in Catholic districts, the life of individuals and the community. The messengers of the Faith have always put it to the service of evangelization. Up to our own times, in China for instance, most of the prayers recited in common — morning and evening prayers, prayers at Mass, Sunday and feast day prayers — were sung in a tone very like the *tonus simplex* of the Pater noster of the Mass. In well executed singing the new Christians learn to pray with joy and trust to the Heavenly Father, to share actively in the worship. Religious singing contains in germ Christian customs (Christmas carols) and reinforces in a growing community, the consciousness of solidarity. What the missionary's words can only imperfectly obtain — he is nearly always speaking in a foreign language — that is to say, to lead his spiritual children to understand and live profoundly the mysteries of the faith which hymns sung by the community frequently achieve, if the words and music accord with the people's sentiments. The Christians in the mission countries are usually much more sensitive to the affective values which lie in hymns ; exempt from our intellectualism they are more easily influenced and able to express their interior life in canticles, in which, more than elsewhere, they live the mysteries of faith and love, our redemption and our glorification in Christ.

Jungmann attributes to hymn singing a great influence on the religious formation of children : " Executed in common, " he says, " it induces in a high degree personal activity. Moreover, its poetical and musical character exerts a special charm on their ears. The religious sentiments which it expresses pass into their souls, and so do the thoughts, on condition that they are explained to them. And it is certain that they will penetrate more deeply in the memory than prosaic texts learnt by heart. " <sup>1</sup>

Evangelization in mission countries is rather like catechesis to children in Christian ones. There also, the Good News is announced for the first time to an audience which is usually capable of joyous astonishment and profound emotion, which does not fear to show

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<sup>1</sup> J. JUNGMAUN, *Catéchèse*, Brussels, Ed. *Lumen Vitae*, 1955, pp. 188-189.

its feelings and ideas openly. Hence, if the parochial life of Christian countries requires hymn singing in common, that same singing is an absolute necessity in mission countries. "The recollected congregation which takes part in the sacrifice of the altar, where Our Saviour, in union with His sons bought by His blood, sing the epithalamia of His immense charity, cannot certainly keep silence, since "to sing is the act of him who loves — cantare amantis est."<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Encyclical *Mediator Dei*, A. A. S., XXXIX (1947), p. 588.

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# Liturgical Didactic Material <sup>1</sup>

Reviewed by Albert MATHÉ, S. J.

*International Centre for Studies in Religious Education*

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## 1. Picture Books.

Liturgical picture-books: *Les Sacrements*, Paris, Éd. du Cerf, 1949-1952.

This book contains 9 numbers of "Fêtes et Saisons." Artistic photographs, lively and well chosen, at the same time very modern and very religious.

*L'Art de l'Église*, Abbaye de St. André, Bruges. A quarterly review. Liturgical illustrations which are very beautiful and varied, classical, ancient and modern, of very pure and distinguished aesthetic taste.

*L'Art sacré*, Paris, Éd. du Cerf. A monthly magazine. Numerous liturgical illustrations of good taste, with articles full of suggestions for the adornment of our churches and chapels.

DANIEL-ROPS, *Missa est*, Paris, Fayard, 1951, 66 pp. Thirty-three fine photographs, apart from the text, with commentary.

*Fêtes et Saisons*, Paris, Éd. du Cerf, Brussels, Pensée catholique. Except for the albums containing the Mass and the Sacraments, numerous separate numbers can be still obtained, among others: Baptism, Confirmation, Confession, Marriage, Sacrament for the Sick, Solemn Communion, the Eucharist, the People of the Mass, the Bishop, Lent, the Paschal Vigil, Ordinations, the Psalms, etc. Photographs and text are always original and animated, at once modern and religious.

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<sup>1</sup> We must offer our apologies to our English readers for this list containing chiefly French, German and Flemish titles. We know that didactic material in England and the United States is abundant, and that teachers will easily find their complete requirements. If some well-informed guide would choose the best recent productions for *Lumen Vitae*, we will willingly accept his suggestions — also, any material sent to us by the publishers for examination and review. All the same, our list may, we hope, be useful as stimulating comparisons and perhaps providing useful suggestions. — Address of Rev. A. Mathé: 184, rue Washington, Brussels, BELGIQUE (Editor's note).

- KUNKEL, H. *La Messe en images*, Louvain, Centre liturgique du Mont-César, 1954, 140 pp., 134 illustr. (full page). Fine reproductions of low Mass, High Mass, Episcopal and Papal Masses and of some religious liturgical works of art.
- LALLIER, Mgr., *La Messe*, according to the small missal of the Brothers of Jesus, Abbaye de St. Wandrille, Éd. de Fontenelle, 1952, 39 heliographs, detachable leaves, illustrating the ceremonies of low Mass. A collection of views, remarkable for their sobriety and religious feeling.
- LUTZELER, H., Series "Der Bilderkreis : " *Bild Christi ; Das Jahr des Herrn ; Die Gestalt des Heiligen ; Die Heilige Nacht*. Freiburg. In French and Dutch ; Bruges, Desclée de Brouwer. These artistic albums, small size, each containing thirty reproductions, five being in colour, taken in all spheres of art, witness to a very judicious and certain taste.
- LEFEBVRE, Dom G., O. S. B., *Mon année avec l'Église*, Abbaye St. André-lez-Bruges, 120 pp., ill., 1947. Each page of this liturgical album, devoted to the chief feasts of the year, presents the commentary on the feast with illustrations by Speybrouck and De Cramer. For children of 10 to 12.
- PAPILLON, J. Dom., O. P., *Pour comprendre les Sacrements*, Tours, Éd. Mame, 1954, 32 pp. Illustrations taken in "Fêtes et Saisons." A biblical commentary, liturgical and spiritual.

## 2. Pictures, Cut outs, Exercise Books.

- ANSGAR, Sr. M., O. P., London, Bloomsbury Publishing Co., Ltd., 1947. *The holy Sacrifice of the Mass*, 38 outlines for colouring. *The seven Sacraments*, 7 outlines. Prayers to write out. For infants.
- Apostolat liturgique, *L'Ordinaire de la Messe en bons-points*, Abbaye St. André-lez-Bruges, 45 drawings by R. DE CRAMER, with fresh and harmonious colouring.
- Bouwplaten over de H. Mis voor het flanelbord*, Tilburg R. K. Jongensweeshuis. Two boards of 68 × 50 cm, with detachable figures, to be exhibited on a flannel board together, indicating the general layout of Mass.
- BOYER, Canon, *Mon devoir de liturgie*, Paris, Éd. de l'École, 1951. 16 double leaflets with drawings and questions. For 9-11.
- Comment apprendre à nos tout-petits à vivre leur Messe ?* Paris, Le grain de Sénevé, 1954, 24 pp. and 4 packets of loose leaves. In these packets the pictures are arranged by subjects : 1) Le Sacrifice ; 2) Notre Participation ; 3) Notre union à l'Église ; 4) Comment se préparer.
- COPPENS, *Prentjes over de Mis en de Sacramenten*, Nimeguen, St. Theresia Boekhandel. 26 pictures, 6 × 8 cm. on the ceremonies of the Mass ; 7 pictures of the sacraments.

- FAUSTINUS, *Godsdienstplaten voor het flanelbord*, Rotterdam, J. de Weyer and Zn. 1. *Het Brood des Levens*, two packets; a. Parable of the feast and multiplication of loaves, b. The Last Supper and Communion. 2. *Het Offer*. Sacrifice in the Old and New Testaments. The use of these packets brings to life the biblical foundations of the liturgy, in a visual and progressive manner.
- GILISSEN, J., *Het Meesterstuk der Liefde*. Utrecht, St. Gregoriushuis, 1953. *Werkboekjes* (leerkring 2, 3, klas 5). *Opdrachtboekje* (6, 7, 8). A good method for teaching how to live the Church's life in the liturgy by means of schemas, texts to be completed, questions, outlines for colouring.
- GOTZEL, Mgr. Gustav, *Katholische Religionslehre im Wort und Bild*. III. *Die Sakramentenlehre*. A. Für Katecheten; B. Werkheftmaterial für Kinder. Donauwörth, Ludwig Auer, Cassianeum, 40 pp., 18 separate leaves for the pupil with numerous liturgical drawings and commentaries on the sacraments.
- Herders Bilderbogen*, Friburg, Herder, no. 4. Adhesive pages, with 15 photographs of the ceremonies of the Mass, pp. 29, 30. *Liturgie der Hl. Osternacht*, double gummed pages with German letterpress, illuminated and with symbols relating to the Paschal Vigil.
- LEFEBVRE, Dom G., O. S. B., *L'Année liturgique en Vitrauphanie*, Abbaye St. André-lez-Bruges, 1948. 60 silhouettes by Lucie Godfrey, for cutting out and sticking on transparent coloured paper and putting on a window or near a lamp, which makes a very decorative transparency or picture. Suggestions are given as to the choice of colours.
- Mission Helpers of the Sacred Heart. *Our Mass*, St. Paul Minnesota Catechetical Guild, Ed. Soc., 24 pp. of letterpress and four gummed leaves containing 40 photographic vignettes. A good collection easy to use.

### 3. Pictures.

- COPPENS, *Platen over de H. Mis*, Louvain, the Fathers of the Holy Ghost, 8 reproductions in colours, 60 × 48 cm. The Principal Moments of the Mass. Very successful, artistically as well as from the liturgical and religious points of view.
- GOUPPY, *Les Évangiles des Dimanches*, Brussels, Blanchart. 52 coloured pictures, 34 × 25 cm., letterpress in Flemish, French or English.
- St. Theresia Boekhandel, *Tableaux sur la Messe*, 26 reproductions in black and white, 59 × 49 cm. Artistic photographs of the ceremonies of the Mass, inspiring recollection and well produced.

### 4. Film strips.

- a. *General Subjects and Ceremonies*. — *A la clarté des cierges et des vitraux*, Paris, Beaux Films, 8 black and white films. Ceremonies of the

Mass ; the liturgical year ; sacraments and benedictions ; Christian symbolism. Very detailed, not much unity.

*Aspects des Sacrements*, Paris, Éd. du Berge, 6 films in black and white. Avant Jésus, dans l'Ancien Testament ; avec Jésus dans l'Évangile ; avec l'Église dans la liturgie. Spiritless drawings ; little application to Christian life.

*Kerkelijk Leven*, Sacraments, Sacramentals, the liturgical year. Louvain C. P. O. 24 black and white films in preparation, Leica. Already published : 10 films on the sacraments, 1 on the dedication of a church, with booklets. Excellent composition : bible, theology application to life, all in close alliance with the liturgical ceremonies. Artistic photographs. For Middle Schools and for adults.

*Vie chrétienne et liturgique*, Paris, Éd. du Berger, 12 black and white films. First a basic subject : the soul of the liturgy. Then the objects, ceremonies and liturgical seasons.

**b. The Mass.** — *Eucharistie*, Louvain C. P. O. 4 black and white films, leica (Nos. 4, 5, 6, 7 in the series " Kerkelijk Leven "). For 14 and over. No. 4 : The meaning of sacrifice ; nos. 5-7 : ceremonies.

*L'Eucharistie comme Sacrifice*, Brussels, O.S.B.E.F., 1 black and white film, no. 27 in the series " Le Catéchisme des diocèses belges, " Ceremonies on the Gospel background. For 9-12.

*La Messe aimée, comprise et vécue*, Dir. C. Bruel, Paris, Thoquet. Two sepia films. 1. The meaning of sacrifice. 2. The ceremonies.

*Ordo Romanus*, Hilversum, P.O.C. 2 films in black and white, Leica. The Mass as it was celebrated in Rome about 600.

*Le sacrifice de la Messe*, Paris, Lumina, 1 film in colours (no. 23 of the series " A l'école de Jésus. " The meaning of sacrifice). For 11-13.

*Le sacrifice du peuple chrétien*, Dir. J. Willame. Brussels, Stopcolor. 2 films in colours, Leica. The ceremonies. For all.

*La sainte Messe*, Dir. F. R. Jammes, Paris, Éd. du Berger, 4 films in black and white. 1. The meaning of sacrifice ; 2-4. Ceremonies.

*Tut Dies zu meinem Andenken*. Erkenschwick, Schumacher, 6 films in black and white, Leica. For 14 and over. Translated in Dutch by the Interdiocesaan Liturgisch Secretariaat at Alverna, Netherlands. 1. The meaning of sacrifice ; 2-6. Ceremonies.

*Ceremoniale acolytharum*. 2 films in black and white, Brussels, Stopfilm-Service. How to serve Mass.

To appear shortly : *Le Saint Sacrifice de la Messe*, Dir. G. Lefebvre, Paris, Éd. du Berger, 3 films in colours. 1. The meaning of sacrifice ; 2-3. Ceremonies.

*General Remarks on the Series on the Mass.* — Among the films representing the ceremonies of the Mass, the most striking seem to us to be the two strips in colours, published by Stopcolor. Although the congregation



is less in evidence, the close-ups of the priest's actions at the altar are very beautiful. There are also excellent photographs in black and white in the series by Schumacher and C. P. O. ; the booklets accompanying them give a full commentary. In film 27 of the series on the Belgian catechism at O.S. B. E. F., the concordance between the ceremonies of the Mass and the Gospel scenes is sometimes very instructive, but less well chosen in other places. By means of the film published by P. O. C., Hilversum on the Celebration as it was performed in the 6th century, we can form a clearer idea of the fundamental framework of the Eucharistic liturgy.

The films on the *Meaning of sacrifice* are as a rule composed in the following manner : the notion of sacrifice in general, non-christian rites, the Cross, the Last Supper, Mass, the participation by the faithful. In this sense the first film of C. Bruel is very simple and suggestive. That in the series, "A l'École de Jésus" is more didactic and has the advantage of colour. Those of Schumacher and C. P. O. place the continuation of Christ's sacrifice in His present life in glory. That of Don Jammes has a strong theological structure, but is scarcely biblical. Other films illustrate more fully the "prefigurations" in the Old Testament and in the Gospel, but hardly bring out the unity of the preparation for the Eucharist around and in the celebration of the Jewish Pasch (see on this subject the article in the present issue on pp. 385-389). We hope that this unity will be better brought out in the first film of the series which Berger announce as forthcoming, in which Dom G. Lefebvre proposes to "explain what the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass is... by setting the Last Supper, when the Eucharist was instituted, in its historical framework... In this context the Mass is identified with the mystery of Easter, which is the converging point of the Old and New Testaments."

**c. The Liturgical Year.** — *En la maison de Dieu*, Paris, Bonne Presse, 24 films in black and white. The liturgical meaning of Sundays, with numerous illuminated texts. For 8-10.

*Ostervigil*, Dir. H. Bretzler. Friburg, Calig, 1 film in black and white, 54 views, leica. The Paschal Vigil.

*La Semaine Sainte*, Dir. P. Roguet, Paris, Éd. du Berger, 3 films in black and white. 1. Lent ; 2. Holy Thursday ; 3. Good Friday. The Paschal Vigil.

*La Vigile pascale*, Dir. J. François, Paris, Bonne Presse, 2 films in black and white. 1. The event of Easter ; 2. The paschal liturgy.

Numerous films on Christmas and the Passion.

*General remarks on the films dealing with the Easter liturgy.* — The aim is to teach the sense of the mystery and to show how this mystery is actually lived in the liturgy. The first film by the Bonne Presse illustrates very well what the Passover was for the Jews and what it was for Jesus. The third film in the Berger edition reproduces the excellent photographs of the ceremonies which appeared in "Fêtes et Saisons." Bretzler's film, we think, realizes best the

unity of the whole ; the photographs of the ceremonies are artistic, in an austere style ; biblical pictures and symbols of Christian art have been intermingled, to make the meaning more complete.

### 5. Sound Films.

*Nuit de Pâques*, 35 or 16 mm., French, or 16 mm., Flemish, 30 minutes. Paris,

Missions par le cinéma, 8, rue Danton ; Brussels, Cipra, 55, avenue du Parc.

*Ordinations*, 35 or 16 mm., 30 minutes, French, *ibid*.

*Priester in eeuwigheid*, 16 mm., 45 minutes, Flemish, Mechelm, Bonden van het H. Hart.

*Sacre d'un évêque*, 35 or 16 mm., 30 minutes, French. Missions par le cinéma.

St. Paul film. *Courts métrages sonores*. Les sacrements, 19 films ; Paris, Lyons, Marseille, Société St-Paul.

Our appreciation is based provisionally on a film, no. 9 : the Eucharist. *Contents* : the sacrifice of Isaac, of the paschal lamb, the Last Supper, the Cross, the Consecration, a miracle relating to the Real Presence. *Composition* : classical ; it brings out the unity of the Cross and the consecration, but does not sufficiently take into account the basic unity of the Eucharistic action. Sacrifice is uniquely seen as destruction ; the element of union with God is passed over in silence ; neither is the communion of the faithful mentioned.

*Realization* : The presentation is full of the religious sense ; the acting is not theatrical, though somewhat banal : several moving moments. A fairly well realized fusion of the visible reality and the marvellous which we recognize through faith.

### 6. Musical Recordings.

**a. Gregorian chant.** — Benedictines, *Chœur de moniales*. 3 records, 30 cm. S. M.

BEURON — *Chœurs des moines de l'abbaye St-Martin*. Dir. Dom Maur. Pfaff. First Vespers of the Nativity. 1 long playing record, 30 cm. Archiv.

CHEVILLY. — *Schola des Pères du St-Esprit du Grand Scolasticat*. Dir. L. Deiss. Easter Sunday ; cycle of Christmas, 1 long playing record.

SOLESMES. — *Chœurs des moines de l'abbaye de St-Pierre*. Dir. Dom Joseph Gajard, O. S. B., 5 long playing records, 30 cm. Decca ; 8 long playing records, 25 cm. Decca ; 12 records, His Master's Voice.

TRAPPE. — *Chœur des moines trappistes*, 4 records, 30 cm. S. M. 5 records 25 cm. (Kyriale) S. M.

**b. Psalms in French.** — Psalmodie J. Gelineau. 1st Series, 1 long playing record, 30 cm. ; 2nd series, 1 long playing record, 25 cm. ; 3rd series, 1 long playing record, 25 cm. S. M.

**c. Polyphony.** — Among the numerous recordings, an asterpiece : the *Magnificat* by J. S. Bach, 1 long playing record, 30 cm. Arch. (Germany). See the article by Fr. Lebacqz in *Lumen Vitae*, VI (1951), pp. 480-489.

A virtuoso interpretation of some classical pieces : *Les petits chanteurs de Vienne* : Pergolesi : Quae moerebat ; Inflammatus. Mozart : Alleluia ; Laudate Dominum ; Sub tuum praesidium. Schubert : Salve Regina. Von Herbeck : Pueri concinnite. 1 long playing record, 25 cm. Philips.

### 7. Hymn Books.

BACH, Jean-Sebastien. — *Dix chorals*, Paris, Les Presses d'Ile de France. For four voices, arranged for three by César Geoffray.

BRUNING, Dr. El., O. F. M. — *Zingt allen mee*, Utrecht, Kerkmuziekhandel, Wed. J. R. Van Rossum, 472 pp. 7 gregorian Masses, Compline, 38 motets in Latin, 134 in Dutch.

*Cantemus*, *ibid.*, Utrecht, Van Rossum. Hymn book, 55 in Latin, 92 in Dutch with 5 Gregorian Masses. Modern notation.

*Cantoral*, Brussels, Foyer Notre Dame, 1954, 318 pp. Canticles and motets, collected by the choir des Landes, under the direction of the Rev. Hanquet, S. J. and L. Rinen. A remarkable choice of simple melodies sober and popular, suitable for different parts of the liturgical year.

COCKENPOT, Francine. — *Mariales*, Paris, Éd. du Seuil, 1949. Unpublished hymns to Our Lady : Mystery of Joy ; Mystery of Love ; Mystery of Sorrow ; Marian Mass.

GELINEAU. — *Vingt-quatre psaumes et un cantique*, Paris, Éd. du Cerf, 1953. Harmonies for four mixed voices. *Ibid.* *Accompagnement pour harmonium*. An original attempt which reveals the great possibilities for liturgical singing in modern language.

GEOFFRAY, César. — *7 Benedicite*, Paris, Éd. Franciscaines, 1948, 22 pp. Seven little chorals for 3 equal voices, for the seven days of the week. Words by Jean Fallaix.

— *Gloire au Seigneur*, Paris, Éd. du Seuil, 1946. A choice of 44 new hymns for the different parts of the Mass and times of the day. A book of quality, which compensates for many others. Original words.

— *Les petites heures de la route*, Paris, Éd. du Seuil, 1946. 12 songs for four voices, also remarkable for their melodious and harmonious novelty. Words by André Chevalier and Léon Chancerel.

*Gloire au Seigneur*, no. 2, Paris, Éd. du Seuil, 1952. 97 hymns for the liturgical year, which can all be sung in unison by the congregation. The words are remarkable for their theological exactitude and plainness.

*Gregoriaans Missaal met Vespers*, voor de Zon-en feestdagen, Louvain, Centre liturgique du Mont César, 1728 pp. and 212 additional pages for the feasts of the Belgian dioceses. 18 Gregorian Masses, 4 credos, and the

proper of all the Sundays of the liturgical year and the great feasts. This missal also contains the texts of the collects, epistles and gospels. Gregorian annotations on a five line stave.

*Gotteslob, Kirchengebet und Kirchenlied*, Berlin, Friburg (Bresgau) Christopherus-Verlag, Herder, 265 pp. A Gregorian Mass and a selection of German hymns for the liturgical year, Betsingmesse. Gregorian and modern notation is black on red lines.

*Sursum Corda*, Malines, Ligue du Sacré-Cœur, 863 pp. 8 Gregorian Masses, 3 Credos, Mass for the Dead in Dutch, very melodious. A collection of prayers of 340 pages.

*Volksaangboek*, Tournai, Desclée, 584 pp. Hymns for the Mass, Vespers and Benediction. Motets and hymns in Dutch for the liturgical year.

*Zangboekje*, Louvain, Centre liturgique du Mont César, 300 pp. Latin hymns in Gregorian with Dutch translations, for the Mass and Benediction. A collection of prayers. Gregorian notation.

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# The Pastorate of Confirmation : Administration of the Sacrament

by Mgr Henri DUPONT

*Auxiliary Bishop of Lille*<sup>1</sup>

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Like all the sacramental rites, the liturgy of Confirmation is evocative of the redemptive graces which it transmits, and the way in which it is celebrated ought to make this clear.

For some years the attention of the clergy and faithful has been drawn to evangelization by the liturgy and the pastorate has been reconsidered as neither alongside, nor additional to, the liturgy, but forming an integral part of it. With the rest, the administration of Confirmation has been studied in this light.

The suitable age was considered first ; in Belgium and France, among other countries, Confirmation is conferred at the same time as Solemn Communion, when the child is about eleven or twelve, that is to say, when his primary formation is finished and he knows his catechism, which forms the essential equipment of religious knowledge for many of our Christians. Now, do we call in the architect when the house is completed ? Besides, if we consider that Confirmation, the Sacrament of initiation, is also that of witness, the child, even at an early age, seems to need it as soon as he has the sense of God and is, by that very fact, called upon to bear witness before his companions.

The French episcopate is considering the matter. The directory for the pastorate of the Sacraments, published in 1951, did no more than recall the Church's law when it requested that this Sacrament

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<sup>1</sup> Born at Lille in 1896, Mgr Henri DUPONT is a Master of Arts. In 1923, he was nominated professor at the Minor Seminary of Hazebrouck. Curé of the parish of Notre-Dame in the same town in 1940, he became Dean of Merville in 1945. Elected titular bishop of Dorylée, he was consecrated on the 29th September 1951 and named Auxiliary Bishop to His Eminence Cardinal Liénart. Mgr Dupont is also Président d'Honneur of the Comité Flamand of France. — Address : 81 bis, Rue Sainte-Catherine, Lille, FRANCE (Editor's note).

should be conferred at the age of reason and indicated that, after Baptism, it was a preparation for Communion. The reform is taking place slowly, inviting the clergy to work at the education of the faithful (children and teachers) on the subject of their cooperation in the action of the Holy Spirit. Numerous dioceses have moved in the matter. The author of this note is witness of efforts which have been made in the diocese of Lille as a consequence of His Eminence's ordinance of December 1951, applying the directions of the Bishops' Assembly to the diocese.

One obstacle stands in the way of the strict application of this reform : the extent of episcopal responsibilities. The bishop likes to preside himself at the administration of this Sacrament, it is the unique occasion for him to make his pastoral visit. Now, the number of parishes to be visited obliges him to spread his circuit over several years, with the result that the confirmation of his baptized diocesans is delayed until 10 or 11, even if they come from Christian homes. This is the case in rural dioceses like Luçon.

It is not only the age which is under discussion. If it is desired that the administration of the Sacrament should be something other than a conventional rite, for which the only anxiety of the priest and faithful who are responsible, is to ensure that the strict letter of the law is observed, if it is to become a pastoral action in itself in its preparation, liturgical presentation and utilization for the Christian formation of the child, then it is of primary importance to dispense with the custom of administering the Sacrament to entire battalions of boys and girls. Bishops in charge of populous dioceses find themselves presented with masses of 4, 5 or even 6, hundred children : the candidates form interminable files and when they have advanced with difficulty towards the altar, they are brusquely pushed on to their knees at the feet of a person in a mitre who pronounces their name hastily, then says a short unintelligible formula, makes some gestures which he has to repeat thousands of times in the morning, and when after eight seconds, or ten at the maximum, they get up, it is to pass in front of a priest who wipes the holy oil from their foreheads as if to remove for ever all trace of what the bishop has just performed.

We must call upon the experience of those priests whose holy ministry has made them responsible for children's congregations in order to realize the ability required to control with look and voice a group of five hundred boys and girls, to establish and keep them for an hour in a religious atmosphere of faith and prayer.

There is only one solution : reduce the numbers of candidates and increase the services. A difficult matter — the bishop is less and

less one who is served and more and more one who serves and often has a population of more than a million in his diocese. Oh, for the happy time when the North African dioceses shared among four hundred prelates the evangelization of a country much less populous than the France of today ! There is no question now of a bishop, even helped by an auxiliary, being able to visit each parish in his diocese every year. But is it impossible to form a kind of circuit which would ensure the benefit of a confirmation on a human scale every year at some parochial centres ?

If the old saying, “ *ab actu ad posse valet consecutio* ” still holds good, the experience of the Lille diocese might enlighten enquirers. The traditional circuit ensured the administration of Confirmation to some 18,000 children, from the Monday after Good Shepherd Sunday to the Feast of Corpus Christi in a hundred services shared between the bishop and his auxiliary. This programme was kept up. Besides this, His Eminence the Cardinal decided to add an administration every Wednesday evening in a parish where the clergy desired it. The practice was conclusive. The Confirmation service in the midst of the parochial community is a religious event which is significant. The family is united, the office of godparent is realized as a function, the parochial community is interested and exercises its responsibilities. The child perceives that it is not a question of a simple formality, but of an invasion by God into his life, an active presence of the Holy Spirit in his baptized soul, itself a member of a Church animated by the same Spirit.

Another method has been adopted by the auxiliary, who, with more time at his disposal, has been able to multiply and vary the administrations : on Sunday mornings before the High Mass in small parishes, on Sunday afternoons elsewhere, sometimes before an evening Mass, authorized in some churches. In other cases the service took place in the week at 7 or 8 in the evening. Everywhere there was the same attendance and the same interest. Attempts at adaptation of the same kind have been made in various places. The author has received the enthusiastic remarks of Mgr Bornet, the Auxiliary of Lyons, enchanted by the atmosphere of religious fervour at these parochial gatherings : the congregation, the active participation, the attention given to the bishop's words, the very serious commitment of the godparents. The same satisfaction has been expressed in the diocese of Cambrai, where the round of Confirmations has been established in the same spirit.

The beneficent result of such a practice does not only lie in the dignity, the seriousness, the atmosphere of faith and prayer of these services, but in the fact that it places the Sacrament of Confirmation

in its right place in the Christian's life, restores its true role in Christian opinion, that of a divine Presence which continually calls upon the collaboration of the child and his teachers. Enlightened by the liturgical instruction, all are prepared to **call** upon the Holy Spirit and His action to ensure the growth of these children of God, the baptized and confirmed.

May these few lines written in haste suggest to those responsible the courage to try a reform which seems indispensable to restore to the Sacrament of Confirmation its true value in the opinion of the Christian community.

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# Vigil Preparatory to Confirmation

by Marie-Louise and Jacques DEFOSSA <sup>1</sup>

*Editors of "L'Appel de la Route," Organ of the Movement  
"Compagnons de Saint-François," Brussels*

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The text which we publish below has been used on the occasion of the preparation of some children for the reception of the Sacrament of Confirmation. The vigil took place in one of their homes : one of the curates of the parish was invited and some friends with their children of ages varying between 6 and 15. Some of the adults were given the readings and the singing of the verses of the psalms, the audience as a whole taking up the antiphons. The candidates were dressed in white albs. The ceremony seemed to be understood by all, young and old. We think that six candidates are enough for a similar occasion, if one wishes the vigil to keep its character.

## INTRODUCTION

*Master of Ceremonies.* — We have gathered together in the joy of the Lord : for tomorrow, He will send His Spirit on (give the names of the candidates). We are going to prepare for this wonderful day with them, so that their whole life may be deeply marked by it. (The M. C. invites the audience to be seated, if they are not so already).

*Priest.* — (addressing the candidates, he develops the following theme :) Through baptism, the Lord has saved you from sin and death ; He has allowed you to enter His Church, to become His children and to share in His glory. Through confirmation, He is going to give you all the riches of His Spirit making you like Christ Himself, our elder Brother. That is why you will really deserve to be called by His name : Christians.

*M. C.* — Let us rise. Let us now thank the Lord for the wonders which He will accomplish in... Let us sing the canticle which Our Lady uttered when she told her cousin Elizabeth what the Holy Spirit had accomplished in her.

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<sup>1</sup> See biographical notice in *Lumen Vitae*, VII (1952), p. 221. — Address : 16, avenue des Lucioles, Bruxelles, BELGIQUE (Editor's note).

*Hymn.* — (Gelineau, 1st booklet, page 30, the Magnificat, antiphon 1, verses 1, 4 and 10.

## FIRST PART

*M. C.* — Be seated. We are going to meditate together on the most important of the actions which the bishop has to perform in the course of the ceremony of confirmation.

You know that he will first put his right hand on your head. Sometimes father or mother put their hand on your head, when you were small. Since you have got bigger, they put it more on your shoulder. By these gestures, they want to make you understand that you have nothing to fear : you are under their protection, their strength is at your service. When the bishop will put his hand on your head, you will understand that you are under the protection of God Himself. You will therefore have nothing to fear any more : the Lord's strength will pass into you. For a long time this was the only act at Confirmation. This is how the first confirmation ceremony is described to us.

*Reader.* — We read in the ' Acts of the Apostles ' that Peter and John were sent from Jerusalem to the town of Samaria, so that they might there confirm the numerous Jews who had been baptized. When they arrived in that town, the two apostles prayed for the neophytes, that the Holy Spirit might come to them. For they had only been baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus, but not yet confirmed. Then Peter and John put their hands on them, and they received the Holy Spirit.

*Priest.* — (*Again addressing the candidates, he develops the following theme :*) Up to now, you were children ; but now you are gradually becoming young people. You need God's strength to make you faithful to Jesus Christ. For in the world in which we live, it is not easy to live as perfect Christians : you will discover this more and more : but it will be possible for you with the help of the Holy Spirit.

*M. C.* — Let us rise. Let us proclaim our faith in the help of the Lord. His Spirit will help... to be perfect Christians all their lives.

*Hymns.* — Gelineau, 1st booklet, page 14, psalm 90 (He who lives in the shadow of the Most High), antiphon 1, verses 3, 4 and 8.

*Priest.* — Let us pray. Lord God, You Who created the Earth and the Heavens and all that is in them ; You Who have given us life and preserve us every moment ; You Who allow us to glorify

You and thank You ; we pray to You for... whom You are going to fill with Your Holy Spirit : may Your strength be in them and give them peace, confidence, serenity ; may they never obstruct the work of Your Spirit ; but may all their lives be a continual journey towards Christian perfection ;

We ask You this through Your Son Jesus, our Lord, Who lives and reigns with You, in the unity of that same Spirit for ever and ever.

*Audience.* — Amen.

## SECOND PART

*M. C.* — Be seated. The bishop will perform another action on your foreheads : what is called anointing. He will cover your forehead with a perfumed oil which has been consecrated specially for the purpose, and which we call holy chrism. This action reminds us of important times in the history of mankind. For it was by an anointing like the one you are going to receive that Samuel made David the king of the Jewish people, that Moses made Aaron the High Priest of the Most High, and that Isaiah was consecrated prophet. Listen to the three readings which will remind us of these important moments in the history of the people of God.

*Reader.* — The Lord said to the prophet Samuel : “ Fill thy horn with oil and go to Jesse of Bethlehem ; for I have chosen me a king among his sons. ” Samuel answered the Lord : “ The former king Saul, if he learns of this, will he not kill me ? ” And the Lord said to him : “ I will tell you what you have to do ; you will anoint in My name him whom I will point out to you. ” Samuel therefore did what the Lord had commanded him. He set out for Bethlehem. Arrived at Jesse's house, he purified Jesse himself and his sons and invited them to offer a sacrifice to God.

When he saw the son who was called Eliab, Samuel thought : “ This is certainly the one the Lord has chosen. ” But the Lord said to him : “ Do not be impressed by his height nor good looks ; man sees the outward appearance, but the Lord reads the heart. ” Six other sons of Jesse passed in front of Samuel, but none of them was the one chosen by the Lord.

The prophet then asked Jesse : “ Have you no other son ? ” — “ Yes, ” he replied. “ There is still the youngest : he is pasturing our sheep. ”

They sent to find him : he was called David. He was fair and had

a very pleasant face, with fine eyes. The Lord said to Samuel ;  
 “ This is he : anoint his forehead with the oil. ”

Samuel took his horn of oil and anointed David in the midst of his brothers. From that moment, the Spirit of the Lord took possession of David.

*Second Reader.* — The Lord said to Moses : “ You are to consecrate your brother Aaron : he shall be my high priest ; take everything necessary for the sacrifice and the consecration. ” Moses did what God commanded him. He gathered together all the people and explained to them what the Lord had commanded.

He then made Aaron approach, purified him and dressed him in the vestments of the high priest. Then he took the oil and, pouring it on Aaron’s head, he anointed him to consecrate him. After that, he offered a sacrifice to the Lord.

*Third Reader.* — This is what the prophet Isaiah says : The Spirit of the Lord is upon me ; for the Lord hath consecrated me by the anointing. He has sent me to tell the good news to the humble, to console the afflicted, to proclaim deliverance to those in bondage, to announce the goodness of our God, to pour the oil of joy on foreheads, to teach the songs of praise instead of words of despair.

*Priest.* — (*Addressing the candidates, he develops the following theme :*) By receiving the unction of the holy chrism, you will share in the kingship, priesthood and prophetic mission of Christ.

*M. C.* — Let us rise. Let us sing our joy. Like the good shepherd who leads his sheep to the best pasture, the Lord will heap the gifts of His Spirit upon those who receive His unction.

*Hymn.* — Gelineau, booklet I, page 6, psalm 22 (The Lord is my Shepherd), antiphon 1, verses 3, 4 and 5.

*Priest.* — Let us pray. Lord God, You Who chose the young David as the king of your people and commanded the prophet Samuel to consecrate him by anointing him with oil on his forehead ; You Who have in the same way consecrated Aaron as high priest by Your servant Moses ; You Who consecrated Isaiah and filled him with Your Holy Spirit, so that he might be Your prophet ; we pray to You for... whom You are going to consecrate by this same unction that they may share in the kingship of Your Son Jesus, in His priesthood and His prophetic mission ; that their whole lives may be, for all, a comfort and a light ; we ask You this by that same Jesus Christ Who lives and reigns with You in the unity of the Holy Spirit for ever and ever.

*Audience.* — Amen.



## THIRD PART

*M. C.* — Be seated. The bishop will finally make the sign of the cross over you. For it is by the sign of the cross that the disciples of Jesus Christ are recognized, as the apostle Paul reminds us.

*Reader.* — This is what St. Paul wrote to the faithful of the church of Corinth :

The language which the cross speaks is folly for those people who are going to ruin ; while for those who are saved, for us, it is a divine force. For it is written : “ I will destroy the wisdom of the wise ; I will bring to nothing the knowledge of the learned. ” Where is the wise man ? Where is the learned ? Where is the seeker after this world ? Has not God convinced the wisdom of the world of foolishness ? Since the world, with its wisdom, has not recognized God in divine wisdom, it has pleased God to save the believers by the folly of His message.

The Jews ask for miracles and the Greeks seek for wisdom ; but we announce Christ crucified : a scandal in the eyes of the Jews and foolishness for the heathen. For the elect, whether they are Jews or Greeks (or any other nation) it is the force of God, the wisdom of God. For the folly of God is wiser than the wisdom of men ; and the weakness of God stronger than the strength of men.

Look therefore at the community which you are : amongst you, there are none who have the reputation of being wise and learned, nor many noble and powerful. For God has willed to choose the weak things of this world to confound those who think themselves the strongest ; He has chosen those of obscure origin despised by the world to bring to nothing those who think themselves someone.

So no creature has anything to be proud of before God. For it is thanks to Him that we are in Jesus Christ, that Jesus Who is for us wisdom and justice, sanctification and redemption.

*Priest.* — (*Again addressing the candidates, develops the following theme :*) The cross with which you are marked for ever, is a sign of suffering, of victory and glory.

*M. C.* — Let us glorify the Lord Who has redeemed us by the cross.

*Hymn.* — (Gelineau, 2nd booklet, page 97, the Canticle of Zacharias (Blessed be the Lord), antiphon I, verses 1, 2, and 8.

*Priest.* — Let us pray. Lord God, You Who willed that men should be redeemed by the death of Your Son Jesus on the cross ;

We pray to You for... who are going to receive solemnly on their foreheads and in their hearts the sign of the cross : that they may know better and better the mystery of this sign and receive in Heaven the fruits of the redemption which the cross has bought for us.

We ask You this by this same Jesus Christ Who lives and reigns with You in the unity of the Holy Spirit for ever and ever.

*Audience.* — Amen.

## CONCLUSION

*M. C.* — After having recalled the riches of the ceremony which will take place tomorrow, the moment has come for us all to make the appropriate resolutions. The priest will therefore speak to the candidates, their parents, and to everybody who is here. Each of us will reply with all his soul.

*Priest...* (*the names of all the candidates:*) You will tomorrow receive the gifts of the Holy Spirit. From now on you will be the house of the Spirit of God : He will act in you silently ; He will transform you ; He will make you perfect Christians and will give you the strength to bear witness on all occasions to your love for God and your neighbour. Will you freely receive the sacrament of Confirmation ?

*Candidates.* — I will.

*Priest.* — Will you open your mind, your heart, your soul to the Holy Spirit of God ?

*Candidates.* — I will.

*Priest.* — Will you obey everything that He will say to you ?

*Candidates.* — I will.

*Priest.* — Lord God Almighty, Who sees the desire and good will of... Send Your Holy Spirit upon them ; we pray You by Your Son Jesus, our Lord.

*Audience.* — Amen.

*Priest.* — And you, dear parents, who have waited so eagerly for the day which is about to come ; you who have prepared your child to receive the sacrament of Confirmation ; your task is not over. You must help him to be faithful to the graces which he will receive tomorrow. Will you always respect the Holy Spirit dwelling in his soul ?

*Parents.* — We will.

*Priest.* — Will you, by your advice and your example, help him to hear the Spirit of God and to obey Him on all occasions ?

*Parents.* — We will.

*Priest.* — Will you help him to take the place which the Holy Spirit has meant for him in the Christian community ?

*Parents.* — We will.

*Priest.* — Lord God Almighty, from Whom we derive our pater-nity and maternity spiritual and corporal, deign to listen to these fathers and mothers of families and give them the strength which they need : may they never hinder Your Spirit from making these children perfect Christians. We ask You this by Your Son Jesus our Lord.

*Audience.* — Amen.

*Priest.* — And you all who are gathered round these future confirmees and their parents, you represent the Church of Christ, that Church in which they should find consolation. Will you, by your prayers, your example and, if necessary, your advice help... to be always faithful to the Sacrament of Confirmation that they are going to receive ?

*Audience.* — We will.

*Priest.* — Lord God, Who knows the depths of our hearts and from Whom no secret is hid, send out Your Holy Spirit upon us ; may He purify us completely, so that we may, all together, love You and praise You worthily. We ask You this by Your Son Jesus, our Lord, Who lives and reigns with You in the unity of this same Spirit, for ever and ever.

*Audience.* — Amen.

*Hymn.* — Gelineau, 2nd booklet, page 64, psalm 97 (Let us sing to the Lord), antiphon 1, verses 1, 2, 3 and 7.

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# Eucharistic Catechesis Based on the Last Supper

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Catechetical methods depend to a large extent on the form which has been given to doctrinal foundation. After considering the causes of a defective structure of the Eucharistic doctrine, we would like to show how renewed by contact with the sources of revelation, it can provide our Eucharistic catechesis with a renewed method.

## I. PRINCIPLES

### 1. *A Commonly Defective Structure.*

*Reaction against Protestantism*, however necessary it may have been and still is to a certain extent, has introduced unilateral viewpoints in the structure of the chapter on the Eucharist, which has now become the one in common use. The errors of the Reformation resulted in the Eucharist being looked upon as a symbolic meal only, at which Christians were to revive their faith. By way of reaction, emphasis was laid : 1. On the Real Presence ; 2. On the sacrificial nature of the Consecration ; 3. On the sacerdotal authority deriving from the " institution " by Christ. In the instructions Holy Scripture served chiefly as " proof. "

Catechesis next underwent the influence of the procedure in use in *philosophy, positive sciences and pedagogy in the XIX century*. In order to obtain a clear formula for the concept of sacrifice the sacrificial ceremonies were analysed as a general phenomenon in the history of religions ; attempts were made to apply the definition

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thus obtained to the ceremony of consecration — which proved very difficult. In pedagogy the exposition of the concept of sacrifice was begun by a comparison taken from daily life : e. g., a feast day present to the father of the family ; a rather unsuitable theoretical application to Eucharistic doctrine led to the development of the practical application : the duty of regular attendance at Mass. Communion was left to the following chapter, in which there was no more question of sacrifice, except perhaps that this sacrament gives the strength to make “ little sacrifices ” (in another sense) in the course of the day.

The *disadvantages* of this method are numerous and sometimes considerable. We will only mention here the disadvantages of too polemical or juridical viewpoints. We will consider more closely the Eucharistic doctrine in itself. The Eucharistic Presence, the sacrifice and sacrament, are not three facts without intrinsic relationship to one another ; they form the organic unity of the Eucharistic “ action. ”

The sacrifice of the Consecration is unique of its kind ; it relates to the sacrifice of the Cross ; it also has an essential relationship to the Resurrection and Ascension ; its exact meaning does not derive from heathen sacrifices, nor from secular gifts. Christ's action at the Last Supper was an “ institution, ” but much more than a kind of “ demonstration, ” it was truly an act of Christ Himself, an “ act of salvation ” which belongs to the centre of the whole history of Salvation, notably at Easter. The disadvantages of a comparison with non-Christian practices are obvious, not only with regard to the sacrificial ceremonies, but still more when applied to the deeper religious content. The central reality of the mystery of salvation, notably the union through charity of all with God in Christ, was far from being brought out, as it should be.

Some teachers or writers have, it is true, attempted to remedy this last disadvantage, the most serious, by additions to the usual text ; but the radical remedy consists in a new form of catechesis which has gone back to the living sources. Instead of a unilateral reaction, it takes as its foundation the proper balance of a synthetic proclamation of the Faith.

## *2. Structure Achieved by a Return to Sources.*

A better understanding of the Holy Scriptures and the liturgy, linked with the study of the declarations of the magistracy on this subject have led to a thorough renewal of catechesis in various

countries. As concerns the Eucharist this renewal has been shown very happily at a meeting of catechists in 1953.<sup>1</sup>

The renovated catechetical method is based on as close a contact as possible with Revelation as given us by God. It sets out clearly the "signs" of the mystery of salvation and explains their "significance" according to the Church's teaching. The principal signs are the "facts" of the history of salvation; they are made clearer by the "words" accompanying them in Holy Scripture; their significance is again found in the "rites" in which the mystery of salvation is now being achieved.

We therefore suggest the following structure for the chapter on the Eucharist:

1. *What is necessary to grasp the meaning of the Eucharist.*

a) The content: Christ's Pasch as the central fact of the mystery of salvation.

b) The form: the signs which were already familiar to the disciples when Jesus made use of them.

2. *What Jesus does in the Eucharistic action.*

a) The connection with eschatology and His historical Passover;

b) The action which He performed and its meaning;

c) The meaning of His "institution" for us.

The way in which this form is developed will depend to a great extent on the pupils' knowledge. The text, which the reader will find below, is meant first for the documentation of teachers, and eventually, after adaptation, for pupils. The first heading (A) covers the subject of the Eucharist as a whole, the second (B) gives further explanation of the relationship of the Mass to the Cross, the Resurrection and Ascension, and also on the union of Christ and the Church in the Eucharist.

In a complete course two or three complementary headings would follow. All the ceremonies of the Mass are examined in detail. The importance of communion for spiritual life merits further explanation. The Veneration of the Blessed Sacrament will also be given special mention, as a permanent Presence, but in its relation with the Eucharist as a whole.

In this way, the usual didactic order is followed: starting with a general view, then passing on by means of an analysis of the parts to a more complete synthesis.

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<sup>1</sup> The speeches were published in the 26th series of *Fiches de pédagogie religieuse, Vérité et Vie*, Strasburg, April 1955.

## II. APPLICATION

### PART ONE : THE LAST SUPPER

The Eucharist was first celebrated by Jesus Himself with His disciples at the Last Supper. In order to realize the meaning of the Mass we must therefore consider what happened at the Last Supper. The apostles were prepared to understand the significance, by all that they knew of the Old Testament and by the special explanations which Jesus gave them. We ask the Holy Ghost to lead us by the same way to understand better and live better the Eucharistic mystery.

#### 1. *On the Way to Jerusalem (Preparation).*

The most important event in the Old Testament is the Passover of the Israelites : they were delivered from Egypt and led to the Promised Land ; during their journey God made a solemn Covenant with them. They celebrated the memory of this event at the greatest feast of the year, by the Paschal meal. After the exile, this memory was completed by the expectation of a better deliverance, in a new Pasch.

Jesus came to achieve this deliverance and to institute the new Paschal supper, the centre of Christian worship.

A) *A New Paschal Event will take place* (the great coming event to be celebrated in the Eucharist). The whole of Jesus' life was directed to a decisive event, which He called His ' hour ' (*John*, VII, 30 ; XII, 23 ; XVII, 1). This great coming event consists in Jesus' return to His Father, that is, His death and Resurrection with His Ascension.

That is *Christ's Pasch*. In this way Jesus came to deliver us from sin and raise us with Him to His Father, in Heaven, which is the eternal Promised Land. Jesus announced this event to His disciples : " Now we are going up to Jerusalem, and all that has been written by the prophets about the Son of Man is to be accomplished... they will kill him ; but on the third day he will rise again " (*Luke*, XVIII, 31-33). He then bade His disciples prepare everything for the forthcoming Paschal meal. For ' His ' Pasch, He wished to institute His ' own ' paschal supper. By sharing in this new paschal meal, we are sharing in Christ's Pasch.

B) *A New Paschal Meal will be celebrated* (the signs which Jesus uses in the Eucharistic celebration).

It was not necessary that Jesus should give the apostles a long explanation in advance of the signs which He used in the Eucharistic celebration. They were prepared for them by their knowledge of the Old Testament and by the Master's preaching. For the meaning of these signs was linked to the whole of Israel's history, and to what Jesus had said about them during His public

life. For us, on the contrary, it is important that we should first rediscover this meaning in order that we also may be prepared to understand what Jesus did and said at the Last Supper. All the details which follow have not an equal importance. The significance of the Eucharistic signs appears more clearly when we take them as a whole in the story of the Last Supper.

In the old Paschal supper, numerous signs appeared : bread, wine, blood, the lamb, prayers, etc. Jesus gave these signs a higher meaning ; He also instituted, in the words of consecration which He pronounced, an entirely new sign of the new Pasch.

a) The *Bread* signifies life. It is in fact a gift of God, by which He supports our life. It is blessed, that is to say, a benediction is pronounced over it, in which we thank God and praise Him before eating bread. Sometimes in sacrifice, bread is withdrawn from its habitual use, but in most sacrifices of food, the oblation is followed by eating. God thus invites men to His table.

Material bread sometimes also signifies God's spiritual benefits. The manna in the desert was considered as a wonderful food which was a prefiguration of the divine food by which man would live for ever.

During His public life Jesus attached a special meaning to the sign of bread. By the miracle of the multiplication of loaves, He prepared His listeners for the revelation of a superior food for our true life. *Christ is Himself living Bread*. He is this by His Word, for man lives " *By everything which comes out of the mouth of God.* " He is also this by His death on the cross, for He gives up His life there to deliver us from sin. He is this above all when after His resurrection He communicates His supernatural life to us (*John*, VI, 41, 51).

b) *Wine* has to a great extent the same significance. God is thanked for it and it serves for sacrifices of food. We read that Melchisedech offered bread and wine. Wine signifies more besides, joy especially (*Ps.* CIII, 15). In Holy Scripture the sign of wine is chiefly employed to describe the perfect joy which the Messiah will bring.

The parables of the eternal feast also contain the sign of wine (*Matt.*, XXII, 9). At Cana (*John*, II, 1 et seq.) Jesus performed a miracle with wine which can be compared to the multiplication of the loaves. At the Last Supper, Jesus is the Spouse of the Church. He is the living Bread ; He is also the true Wine of joy.

c) The sign of *Blood* indicates death on the one hand, but on the other, life. It cannot therefore be considered from a too unilateral standpoint.

The sacrificed animal whose blood is shed, dies. Similar bloody sacrifices were often offered with the intention of avoiding merited punishments. The blood as it were effaced the debt. But God warned the Jews that in offering such sacrifices they were not to conceive of the debt of sin, the required expiation and the reconciliation which He granted, in too material a manner. He told them through the psalmist that He does not eat the flesh of animals and does not drink blood, but that He expects from them the sacrifice of sincere contrition and loving praise (*Ps.* LIX, 9-14). He had already told them this in a different way. When *Abraham* was ready to



sacrifice his son Isaac, it was his trusting obedience which was agreeable to God; but (*Gen.*, XXII, 12), the Lord did not wish that Abraham should shed his son's blood.<sup>1</sup> In the sacrifice of Jesus on the cross, it was not the criminal action of the executioners shedding blood which pleased the Heavenly Father, but the obedience of Christ to a bloody death. In a true sacrifice, death is never the end; it is the passage to a higher life and the sacred union with God. The role which the sign of blood plays in this entrance into communication with God by a holy sacrifice of alliance is much more important than the significance of the blood as an expiatory sacrifice.

For blood is especially the sign of life, the sign of an inviolable vital link. Long before writings existed to confirm a covenant, other very significant 'signs' were used. The two men who were making a pact, plunged their hands into a vase filled with blood, and were united by doing so, as though they were of the same blood! Or else an animal was cut into two pieces, which were placed in front of each other and those who were making covenant walked between them: their covenant was concluded in blood. In the Old Testament, we see that God deigned to use a similar sign when making His covenant with Abraham. When Yahweh promised the land of Chanaan to his descendants, Abraham asked for a sign. God made him cut in half a heifer, a goat and a ram and put the halves opposite one another. At sunset Yahweh repeated His promise and "*a torch of fire passed between the pieces of flesh*" (*Gen.*, XV, 17).

When the solemn Covenant was made in the desert, blood was still more obviously the sign of life. Moses proclaimed to the people the benevolent will of God and His commandments. He then caused young bulls to be immolated as peace sacrifices. "He spread half the blood on the altar" (*Ex.*, XXIV, 6), as representing the place where Yahweh is specially present. Next he read the book of the Covenant, and the people answered: "Whatever Yahweh says, we will do it. Then Moses took the *blood and sprinkled the people with it saying: This is the blood of the Covenant which Yahweh has made with you*" (*Ex.*, XXIV, 8). So the blood in which the Covenant is concluded is the sign of life in union with God.

d) The *Lamb* is a sign of which the disciples must certainly have thought during the Last Supper, although Jesus did not mention it explicitly. Sacrifices of lambs are to be found among all pastoral peoples, signifying the first fruits of the fecundity which God gives the flocks. At the beginning of the Bible we read: "*Abel offered a sacrifice of the firstfruits of his flock*" (*Gen.*, IV, 4). This firstfruits like the first sheaves of the harvest and like bread, always signify life by which man praises and thanks the Lord.

The Paschal Lamb has a particular significance. The blood is the sign of the life which belongs to God. Now, God said to the Israelites in Egypt that they should put the blood of the lamb on the lintels of their doors. Thus God

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<sup>1</sup> The fact that Abraham, who was ready to offer his son, recovered him alive, is a prefiguration of the fact that Christ, after His death on the cross, rose again to eternal life (*Heb.*, XI, 19).

gives the blood of the lamb as the sign of their deliverance, which He is going to perform. The body of the lamb which they are to eat is their viaticum at the moment of undertaking the journey of salvation to the promised land.

Later, special attention was drawn to an ulterior meaning of this symbol. We read in the prophecy of the Servant of Yahweh: "*A victim? Yet he himself bows to the stroke; no word comes from him. Sheep led away to the slaughter-house, ... numbered among the living no more! Be sure it is for my people's guilt I have smitten him... the Lord's will it was... His life laid down for guilt's atoning, he shall yet be rewarded... many shall he claim for his own... So many lives ransomed*" (Is., LXIII, 7, 8, 10, 11, Knox' trans.).

At the beginning of His public life, Jesus caused John to point Him out by a saying which seems to announce the fulfilment of this prophecy: "*Behold the Lamb of God, who taketh away the sins of the world*" (John, I, 21). Jesus will give Himself for us. In His sacrifice He will present His Father with the reparation for our sins and He will thus deliver us from them. The Father, Who accepts Jesus' sacrifice, will raise Him from the dead and cause Him to become for us the source of life in divine charity.

In the Paschal meal of the new Covenant, Jesus will give Himself as food like the true Lamb of God, infinitely surpassing the preparations of the Old Testament, and eminently fulfilling all the prophecies.

e) The chief sign, containing and completing the former, is that of the religious *Meal*.

*Amongst men* a meal is more than a matter of each getting nourishment for himself. It is also a *spiritual reunion*, a 'convivium,' a common life. At the family meal, all partake of the food provided by the common effort; the conversation is a sharing by all of their cares and joys. The meal shared by friends is similar. In ancient times, the meal was especially appropriate when an agreement was being concluded. The Israelites were a very religious people. That is why religion also received its place in ordinary meals: a blessing was pronounced on the food in order to give thanks to God.

In the *religious meal* man enters into a *common life with God*. The sacrifices of food were usually followed by a sacrificial meal, in which man became as it were God's guest. Because of this, the Bible often represents supreme happiness with God as sharing in a Heavenly feast. It is the sign of special blessing from God to be invited to the feast which He has prepared. The psalmist sings of God's benefits in terms which belong to a feast: "*Thou preparest a table for me before my enemies, thou anointest my head with oil and my cup is full*" (Ps. XXII). The Heavenly repast is the symbol of the final blessings of God and perfect union with Him.

The feast, and especially *the marriage of the King's Son* (Matt., XXII, 2), symbolizes in the parables the achievement of the divine plan of salvation. The divine Master not only taught in words, but also in action. The meals which Jesus took with His disciples indicate that the time for God's great invitation had come.

The *Paschal meal* was a religious meal with a particular character. It was first of all a sacrificial repast, since the Lamb eaten at it, had been immolated

in the temple. But this eating, united to the other ceremonies of the Paschal repast was the *celebration of a memorial*. The Hebrew word — zikkaron — which we thus translate signifies much more than does with us, for instance, the feast commemorative of a patriotic victory ; it means an active participation in the permanent event of the covenant. In the Bible, the ‘ memorial ’ produces an effect in the present. When God remembers Israel, He makes them conscious as before of His benevolent intervention. In the same way, when the Israelites commemorate the Paschal event, with the Covenant in the desert, they place themselves once again in the dispositions of soul which God expects of them. The commemoration of the Paschal event has to do with the saving will of God, Who continues to exert it. That is why the remembrance of the former Paschal deliverance connoted the expectation of a new and more complete Paschal deliverance, which should bring perfect joy.

In the time of Jesus the *ceremonial* of the eating of the Pasch included three parts. Before the meal, a first cup of wine was brought. The father of the family said a blessing over it, the paschal ‘ preface : ’ “ Blessed be Thou, Yahweh, our God, Who hast given thy people these days for joy and for remembrance. ” Next, bitter herbs, unleavened bread, the paschal lamb and a second cup of wine were served. The son asked the father the following liturgical question : “ How does this night differ from other nights ? ” And the father gave the explanation. The bitter herbs signified slavery in Egypt ; the unleavened bread recalled the haste with which the departure took place ; the paschal lamb was explained by the command of God so that the Israelites should respond to His merciful will. In accordance with this explanation the guests thanked and praised the Lord, by reciting the first part of the Hallel (*Ps.* CXIII-CXVIII).

The meal properly so-called, in which the food was eaten, formed the second part of the Paschal celebration.

The third part took place after the meal. A special blessing was pronounced over a third cup in thanksgiving for the Paschal meal. Finally, there was a fourth cup, after which the guests sang the second part of the Hallel.

The story of the Last Supper, which we shall go on to consider after this preparation, clearly shows that Jesus set the celebration of His Eucharist in the frame of a last celebration of the Jewish Paschal feast. The evangelists do not tell us exactly at what moment of the ancient ceremonial Jesus introduced the new. It is possible that He consecrated the bread towards the end of the first part, and that the consecration of the wine took the place of the blessing of the third cup. For certain secondary actions of the Last Supper, for instance, the washing of the feet, the pointing out of the traitor and his departure, it is still more difficult to discover the exact moment. But the principal act, with its profound significance, the new Paschal feast which Jesus celebrated and commanded His Church to perform after Him, is clearly described in the Gospel.

## 2. *The New Paschal Feast.*

During the Last Supper, Jesus first indicated the dispositions of soul requisite for the new Paschal feast ; next, He celebrated the Eucharist as

the new Covenant ; finally, He told His disciples how they should re-enact this Paschal meal of the new covenant, in the Mass.

A) *The New Paschal feast is orientated towards the eternal union with God and towards Christ's Passover* (that is to say, His cross and glorification). — According to Jesus' indications (*Luke*, XXII, 8-13), the disciples had prepared everything in a fine room for the Paschal meal. At the stated hour He sat down at table and the twelve apostles with Him (*Luke*, XXII, 14). After the first usual blessing of the first cup, Jesus said something new : “ *I have longed and longed to share this Paschal meal with you before my passion. I tell you, I shall not eat it again till it finds its fulfilment in the kingdom of God* ” (*Luke*, XXII, 15-16). And He passed round the first cup.

It was the last time that Jesus ate the Jewish Paschal meal ; for He was going to achieve the great Paschal passover to Heaven, where the eternal Paschal meal takes place. On earth, He will not any more partake of a Paschal meal with His disciples directly in a visible manner ; but He rejoices because He is going to institute a new Paschal feast for His Church in which, until its celestial achievement, He will celebrate under the sacramental species the new Paschal meal with His disciples. For this meal is the celebration of the great Paschal passover, which Jesus is about to accomplish by His death on the cross and His resurrection.

Jesus is inwardly entirely absorbed by this event. He “ knew that the time had come for his passage from this world to the Father ” (*John*, XIII, 1). He is thinking of His cross for He knows that “ the devil had already put it into the heart of Judas to betray him ” (*John*, XIII, 2) but He is also thinking of His resurrection and ascension, when it will be shown that “ the Father had left everything on his hands, and that it was from God that he came and to God that he went ” (*John*, XIII, 3).

The disciples should have drawn three conclusions from His sacrifice : — That He undertook it voluntarily ; — that He accomplished it as the greatest service of love for men ; — and that they should be ready to imitate Him in this love. An incident during the meal gave the divine Master an occasion for the triple lesson. “ And there was rivalry between them over the question, which of them was to be accounted the greatest ” (*Luke*, XXII, 24). Then “ Jesus rose from the table and began to wash the feet of His disciples ” (*John*, XIII, 4-17). By this charitable service, He prepared them to consider His sacrifice as He describes it to them : “ I am among you as he that serves ” (*Luke*, XXII, 27). “ The Son of Man has come to give his life a ransom for many ” (*Matt.*, XX, 18). His disciples must follow His example (*John*, XIII, 15). If they are united to Christ in His sacrifice, they will be united to Him in the kingdom of God. There is the new disposition which Christ makes in His Father's Name, that is, the New Covenant which He has just concluded (*Luke*, XXII, 29) (The verb *diathemai*, which the Evangelist uses here, corresponds to the noun *diathêkê*, by which The Old and New Covenants are indicated).

B) *The New Covenant is celebrated in the Eucharist.* — The marvellous and mysterious ‘ renewal ’ which Christ came to bring then took place in a



manner which strikes us by its sublime simplicity. Jesus 'took bread,' gave thanks, broke it and gave it (*Luke*, XXII, 19). By this giving of thanks (hence the name of Eucharist) or blessing of praise (*Matt.*, XXVI, 26), He indicates that what is taking place is in honour of God. "*Take and eat: this is My Body, which is given for you*" (*Matt.*, XXVI, 26; *Luke*, XXII, 19). In future the lamb immolated in the Temple will not be eaten, nor the loaves which signify the slavery in Egypt. The true Paschal Lamb is Christ, Who is going to offer Himself on the cross and give His Body as food for the true life. For, by His Resurrection He will communicate, as the living Bread, new life to all, the life of eternity.

The following ceremony of the chalice emphasizes still more what has gone before, in the centre of the history of salvation.

"*Drink ye all of this, for this is my blood of the new testament, shed for you and for many for the remission of sins*" (*Matt.*, XXVI, 28). The Old Testament was concluded in a sacrifice, which consisted in the immolation of animals, the aspersion of the altar (that is, God's place) and that of the people (*Ex.*, XXIV, 8). The New Testament is concluded in Christ's sacrifice (*Luke*, XXII, 20), which consists in His death on the cross, in His entrance into Heaven when risen — "He has entered by his blood into the sanctuary" (*Heb.*, IX, 12) — and in the communication of His life by the Eucharist. That is why the new People of God are constituted (and later, developed) in this Eucharistic sacrifice. Israel became the people of God by the Covenant which was concluded in the sacrifice in the desert. The apostles eat the Body of Christ and drink His Blood at the Last Supper: they thus form the first-fruits of the new people of God, that is, the Church, which is born from Christ's Passover.

C) *The Eucharist must be re-enacted by the Church.* — The new people of God are commanded by Christ to celebrate the Eucharist with Him until the achievement of the Pasch in Heaven: "Do this in remembrance of me" (*Luke*, XXII, 19).

"*Do this.*" To the end of time Jesus will be present among us under the Eucharistic species; but this presence is not chiefly for the purpose of our adoration. The Eucharistic celebration is an action: "Do this."

— *This.* The whole Church has to carry out this action, each according to his function: the priests re-enacting Jesus' gestures in His Name, repeating His consecrating words and distributing His Body at the Communion; the faithful (and the priests too as members of the Church offering with Christ and receiving Him at the Communion).

The Eucharistic action consists in the *whole meal*, that is, first, the introductory prayer and the explanation of the meaning of the celebration (what is sometimes called the Pre-Mass); then, the gesture of 'taking' the bread and wine for the consecration (Offertory) and connecting the great thanksgiving prayer of praise (canon); in the centre: the sacrifice (consecration) and the eating of the consecrated offerings (communion); finally, the concluding prayers.

Understood in this broad sense the words of Christ: "Do this" mean:

“ Celebrate this new Paschal meal ” and this significance is further explained by the rest of the sentence.

“ *In remembrance of Me,* ” that is, celebrate the ‘ active ’ memory of My Pasch, re-enacting what I have done and continue to do with you.

When the Jews partook of the Paschal meal, they were celebrating the memory of the first Passover, that is, what God did for them on that occasion and what their ancestors did : accepted the Covenant and promised to be faithful to it. That was an active celebration ‘ in remembrance ’ of the first Passover : they recognized that God was still using His saving might on their behalf and they committed themselves actively to the Covenant.

Jesus now says : “ Do this in remembrance of *Me*. ” That is to say, Henceforth celebrate actively the memory of My Pasch, that is, My death on the cross, Resurrection and Ascension (cf. the first prayer in the Mass after the consecration).

We must go with Christ, Who delivers us from sin, to the Father ; we commit ourselves always more completely in the New Testament, established by Christ, so as finally to share for ever in the eternal union of love of all with God ‘ in Christ. ’

The Eucharistic act which, faithful to Christ’s words, we accomplish in the sacrifice of the Mass and in Communion, is : — The *commemorative* celebration of the greatest event in the past : Christ’s Passover (His death on the cross, His resurrection and ascension) ; — the *actual* celebration of the greatest event in the present : the continuation of the saving action of God by Christ and our union with Him ; — the *anticipated* celebration of the Heavenly achievement to come : the eternal union of love of all with God, by the perfect ‘ life in Christ. ’

Our Eucharistic celebration is also a renewal of the Last Supper, in order to share in Christ’s Passover. It is a meal, which has a significance full of mystery and particular qualities. The principal quality consists in this : the Eucharistic meal is itself a sacrifice, the sacrifice of Christ and His Church. We will now consider this more closely.

## PART TWO : THE SACRIFICE OF THE MASS

### 1. *Interior and Exterior Sacrifice.*

When men judge one another, they are often deceived because they are looking at superficial appearances ; God knows us by our true worth, because He is looking at our dispositions of soul. It is the same with regard to sacrifice : the exterior is subservient to the interior.

A) *Obedience and love.* — We are entirely dependent on God, Who is our Creator and the source of our supreme happiness. He therefore expects of us that we should be ready to fulfil His will. He especially expects that we should wish to do this through love of Him, inspired by gratitude and the desire to be perfectly united to Him.

The interior sacrifice is the *interior gift of ourselves to God*. “ I give myself

to God, " that is to say : — I put all the talents which I have received from Him gratefully to His service ; — I promise to be faithful to His commandments ; — I desire to know Him in all His perfection so as to admire and praise Him above all things ; — I seek my chief happiness only in eternal union with Him.

This principal end contains the four particular ends of sacrifice : — *adoration* (total submission and supreme love) ; — *petition* (specially in order to obtain the power to do God's will and reach Heaven) ; — *expiation* (in reparation and through a desire for reconciliation in love) ; — *gratitude* (specially a readiness to collaborate with the grace which God gives us, in order to love Him).

Since original sin, men have not been capable of the perfect interior disposition of sacrifice. Christ came to put this right.

His first act was to live in obedience and love as the Father expected of Him (see above). In His discourse after the Last Supper He stated what we should be ready to do in order to be united to Him in the disposition for sacrifice :

— Orientate our lives towards Heaven, where Jesus has preceded us (*John*, XIV, 1-6) ;

— Faithfully to put in practice His teaching and His commandments (*John*, XIV, 21 ; XV, 4-11) ;

— Collaborate docilely with the light and strength of the Holy Ghost Whom Christ has sent us (*John*, XIV, 26 ; XV, 27) ;

— Remain steadfast, with courage and trust in His strength, during persecutions and difficulties (*John*, XIV, 20 ; XVI, 20) ;

— Show charity to all men, like Christ and because of Him (*John*, XV, 12), especially in rendering humble services (*John*, XIII, 14) ;

— To do this in honour of the Father (*John*, XVII, 1-4) and for the unity of all in divine charity (*John*, XVII, 21).

B) *The Ascent to God and meeting with Him*. The exterior realization of the sacrifice is in the expression of this interior gift. It is done in several different ways :

a) *By actions* (the realistic way). When we practise the commandments of God in *our daily actions* we express our obedience and love by means of acts. Each good action can in this way be called a sacrifice. When we carry out our duties although they cost us an effort, when we give up something we like through brotherly love or another good motive, it then may often appear more clearly that we are acting in a spirit of sacrifice. But everything that is pleasant in our lives can be done in God's honour, and when we render service with pleasure, our charity may be all the more perfect. We are acting in a spirit of sacrifice, that is to say, by oblation charity, each time that we really do something for God.

The decisive act in which sacrifice is realized is our ' passage to God ' by *death* and our *union with God in Heaven*.

b) *By religious ceremonies* (the ritualistic way). Men show their sentiments to one another by symbolic gifts, for instance, dainty food : friendship is celebrated by partaking of such food in common.

The union of men with God may be expressed in a similar manner. But here it is necessary that God accept the symbolic gifts and that He truly bestow His spiritual gifts by means of the symbolic meal. This happens by 'the power of consecration and sanctification' which God communicates to the priest.

The ritual 'sacrifice' is thus called from two Latin words — *sacrum facere* — which signify : " To make consecrated-to-God. "

Among various peoples and especially the Israelites, several forms of ritual sacrifices are current. Certain of these practices were not pleasing to God, because they deviated from the true religion. Where suitable signs are employed in their true significance the *principal ceremonies* of the sacrifice are as follows :

*The preparation.* An object which symbolizes man and his life is brought for sacrifice, for instance, foodstuffs, especially animals, because blood signifies life. Then the sacrifice properly so-called takes place :

*The oblation.* The priest consecrates the gift of men to God, for instance, he sprinkles the victim's blood on the altar ;

*The achievement.* God favourably accepts the gift of men and by a symbolic sign He welcomes men to His friendship, for instance, the people are sprinkled with the same blood, or else they receive part of the food offered as a symbol of God's gifts.

The fundamental meaning of these ceremonies is therefore clear, and it corresponds to that of the sacrifice which is performed by non-symbolic actions. In other terms : the sacrifice (the real as well as the ritual) is : *an ascent to God and a meeting with Him*. The word ' sacrifice ' often is taken to mean the ascent (man's gesture, the oblation), but it is better to take the sacrifice in its full significance. The ascent is in fact directed towards the meeting and is fulfilled in that meeting. The oblation becomes active in the partaking of the meal, for he who gives himself to God continues to so give himself when God is united to him.

Christ has made the oblation of His sacrifice on the cross and continues to achieve it in Heaven. He comes to make it present in the Mass and truly there unites our sacrifice to His.

## 2. *The Sacrifice of Christ on the Cross.*

Christ's sacrifice is His Passover (see above). It consists in His return to the Father by the way that the latter indicated to Him.

During His whole life the principal task of Christ was the perfect practice of the love to which God calls man, love towards God and the mutual charity of men for love of God.

Through His example and the words accompanying it, Jesus taught us what that love is. He taught us that He is Himself the divine Son of the Heavenly Father, and that He came to communicate the love with which He was filled to us.

But men have rejected that teaching. They let themselves be blinded by their too earthly desires and by their defective notion of the Messiah. That is why Christ is a stumbling-block to them and they seek to be rid of Him.



God in His mercy willed that Christ should practice this love in the most heroic manner. Jesus agreed to let Himself voluntarily be put to death in horrible torture by His enemies. He bore witness in this way to the greatest love for men : He did not destroy His enemies, so that they might still be converted ; by this heroic charity He merited the deliverance of all men. For His supreme obedience in perfect love for His Father did reparation for our sins.

By this death in sacrifice Christ returned to His Father in Heaven. “ *Father, I commend my soul into your hands* ” (Luke, XXIII, 46).

Thus Jesus died in the perfect sacrificial disposition. The sacrifice which He offered on the cross, consists inwardly in His will to obey by love for His Father, unto the death of the cross : it consists exteriorly in that death.

In offering this sacrifice Christ ascended to the achievement of His sacrifice in the eternal meeting with His Heavenly Father.

### 3. *Christ's Sacrifice Achieved in Heaven.*

The Heavenly Father accepted Christ's sacrifice. Jesus was received with His soul and body in the perfect meeting of love.

The risen Christ has entered Heaven by His Father's side. “ *Father, give glory now to thy Son, that thy Son may give the glory to thee... That they too may be one in us, as thou Father, art in me, and I in thee* ” (John, XVII, 1, 21). The prayer which Jesus pronounced when He went to His sacrifice, continues to sound in Heaven.

His sacrifice does not belong only to the past : *it is continued eternally*. For the disposition of sacrifice in which He accepted death still animates Him, as He is now risen, living eternally in that love of oblation.

Christ's sacrifice in Heaven consists in His *giving Himself without ceasing to the Father*. His interior disposition is always perfect obedience, that is, the agreement of His will with that of His Father, through love. Revelation tells us nothing of the exterior special form in which this disposition would be expressed in Heaven. But we know that in Heaven love finds its perfect achievement in all its forms. Thus the love of Jesus in Heaven continues to work for all men. The finest testimony of this is precisely Holy Mass, because there Christ comes to unite the Church's sacrifice to His, for the greater glory of the Father and the complete sanctification of mankind.

### 4. *Christ's Sacrifice and Ours United in the Mass.*

Christ is the Chief, the Head of His Mystical Body. He wills to honour His Father and to sanctify us, by making us participate in His Pasch (that is, His sacrifice on the cross and His resurrection). That is why He ‘ celebrated ’ this Pasch at the Last Supper, and said to His disciples : “ Do this in remembrance of Me. ” This celebration ‘ in remembrance ’ must be active, so that we commit ourselves entirely to the New Testament, by our union with Christ.

Christ renders His sacrifice present in the Mass by means of a sacramental sign. This sacrifice is the same as that of the cross, but in a *non-bloody*

*manner*, that is to say, He Who makes the offering is the same, He Who is offered also, but there is no longer a real death. For Christ now lives eternally in Heaven where His sacrifice is achieved.

The Mass is therefore also the same sacrifice as that of Heaven but made present on earth by the *ministry of the priest*.

The active disposition of sacrifice animating Christ remains the same as that which animated Him when dying and with which He is now animated in His life in Heaven.

On the cross it was expressed by death ; in the Mass it consists in the words which the priest pronounces in the name of Christ over the bread and wine, in such a way that Christ becomes present as offering Himself, and that by this ceremony He expresses His permanent sacrificial disposition.

*The consecration is the expression of the fact that Jesus gives Himself.* He gives Himself to His Father : that is why the sacrificial act properly so-called begins by a prayer of thanks and praise. He gives Himself to us in two ways : — 1) He offers His acceptance of death in reparation for our sins ; — 2) He gives Himself to us as food, so that He may communicate to us the life in which He entered by His resurrection. He accomplishes this ‘ gift to us ’ through the loving obedience to His Father, to Whom the whole sacrifice is directed. ” <sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> *How is the definition of sacrifice applied to the Mass?* In our explanation we have passed from the reality to the formula (from the thing to the word) ; we have pointed out what happens (interiorly and exteriorly) and we have called that a sacrifice (in its oblation and achievement). Another way of proceeding consists in first formulating a definition of sacrifice and then indicating how it is applied. This method has numerous disadvantages but we will try in this note to satisfy those who prefer this procedure.

The *sacrifice* is an action which consecrates a human gift to God (*sacrum facere*). It is accomplished by the priest, who has received the power of making this consecration, from God. The active participation of the man who is consecrated as an offering, consists in the gift of himself by which he consents in a spirit of obedience and love to be united to God.

Christ is the High-Priest of mankind. He is also the perfect offering. By His Pasch — that is to say, His death and glorification — He unites Himself perfectly in His human nature to His Heavenly Father. This Pasch is an act by which Christ gives Himself to His Father in a spirit of obedience and love.

The obedience and love which are contained in this sacrifice of Christ consist in this, that He rises to the meeting with the Father by the way which the Father wills. He has indeed achieved His Pasch as our Redeemer and Saviour. He accepts the death of the cross to make reparation for our sins and thus to redeem us. He makes Himself our food, by which He communicates to us as the risen Saviour ‘ life in union with God. ’ That is why in Christ’s sacrificial action His ‘ gift to us ’ and His ‘ gift to His Father ’ are indissolubly linked : He gives Himself to His Father as our obedient Saviour : He gives Himself to us as the Saviour Whom the Father has sent and Who unites us to God.

This paschal sacrifice of Christ — offered on the cross and achieved in Heaven — is unique ; it is absolute, self-subsisting. The Eucharistic sacrifice is not a second

A) *The sacrifice of Christ in the hands of the Church.* — At the Consecration Christ is the principal one Who Offers and the principal Offering. The Church celebrates Christ's sacrifice with Him.

Christ offers Himself at the consecration. That is why this act is the most important which is accomplished every day upon earth. The supreme homage of the Son rises from the midst of us to the Father and calls down God's blessing upon us.

*We offer Christ.* We, that is to say, the whole Church, and each according to his function in the Church : the priest as the depositary of the consecrating power of Christ ; the faithful as members of the Church. We belong to the Church by our baptismal character, and the Church, by and with the priest, offers Christ.

B) *The sacrifice of the Church in the hands of Christ.* The Church must also offer herself. She does not do this ' beside ' Christ, but ' by Him, with Him, and in Him. '

Each one is called to make a personal sacrifice, and the whole community has to offer a communal sacrifice. Christ's sacrifice does not replace ours : He does not offer Himself literally ' instead ' of ours ; He offers Himself rather ' in our names ' and requires us to take an active personal part ; that is why He does not make our sacrifice useless, but on the contrary gives it its full value through His merits.

We give ourselves to God. Christ offers our sacrifice and communicates its achievement to us.

*We offer ourselves.* We give ourselves to God (see above) in accordance with His will (obedience) and with the object of being always increasingly united to Him (love). We try to make our dispositions entirely sincere and firm and as fervent as possible. With this object we collaborate with grace, by which we share in the sacrificial dispositions of Christ Himself.

The desire for this unity with Christ is especially expressed in the preparatory ceremony (Offertory) ; the unity itself, in which we offer ourselves with Christ, is realized at the consecration.

*Christ offers us.* He unites us to Him to make us rise to His Father : He offers us with Him in the consecration. When the bread and wine, symbolizing the faithful, are transformed into the Body and Blood of Christ, our sacrifice is assumed in His sacrifice. Christ then comes to make us share in His

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absolute sacrifice. It is the same sacrifice expressed differently and made present by this expression so that the Church shall share in it.

The *Mass* is therefore a relative sacrifice : in its essence it belongs to the paschal sacrifice of Christ. It is a *sacramental* sacrifice. Christ renders His paschal sacrifice present by a ' rite ' which ' signifies ' this sacrifice and which makes it ' effectively ' shared in by the Church.

This rite expresses that Christ is always actively consenting to the death on the cross which He voluntarily underwent in time, and that as our Saviour he is still actively carrying on His sacrifice in Heaven. This rite also expresses that the Church offers herself by Christ and with Him, and that she participates efficiently in the union of Christ and His Father in Heaven.

meeting with the Heavenly Father: He achieves the unity between His sacrifice and ours in the Communion.

*Active participation in the Mass* therefore signifies:

First, *To offer-with-Christ*: to act with Christ offering Himself at the consecration;

As the effect and end of this action, to *receive our share in the* fruits of His sacrifice: to receive Communion and continue in it in a spirit of sacrifice, collaborating with the grace which is given us. To sum up:

The Mass consists in Christ's sacrifice — the continuation of the sacrifice on the cross by Christ Risen — in union with the sacrifice of the Church.

Its effects are immense: — the Mass gives the greatest honour to God; — it obtains all graces; — it procures the remission of temporal penalties for sins; — it unites us always more closely to Christ and also unites us intimately with one another.

The Eucharist is the continually renewed celebration, most rich in content, of the Christian Pasch, in which we live our covenant with God.

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# Our Mass

## *First Presentation of a Liturgical Mystery*

by Sister ST. THOMAS, S. N. D. de N.,  
*Mt. Notre Dame Academy, Reading, Ohio*<sup>1</sup>

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The Sacrifice of the Mass is like "Light." It "Shows up" everything about Christ. The Proper of the Mass portrays His Life that we may imitate it. The Ordinary of the Mass portrays His Action that we may unite with it.<sup>2</sup> Since the source of our knowledge of Christ and therefore our imitation and union with Him is contained in the Scripture, the Mass is a fountainhead of this knowledge and the soul of this union.

It is very important that in the first presentation of the Mass to the child it should not seem complicated to him. To lessen this difficulty it seems both wise and practical to begin the presentation with the principal parts of the Mass. After the teaching concerning these principal parts has been carefully given, the child can then be taught the preparatory and concluding parts of the Eucharistic Sacrifice.

The following program is a summary of the facts of the Mass as presented to children of Grades One and Two. This Program was presented at a school assembly and also at a meeting of the parent-teacher organization. It is suitable for any age group, and has been given by girls and boys of the Eighth Grade.

## INTRODUCTION

### *The Sacrifice of the Mass is a Love Story*

Do you like to get out of a cozy bed when everywhere else it is very cold? Do you like to walk far away from home when it is raining very hard?

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<sup>1</sup> This is an extract of an extensive study. The author favours a 'multiple-sense approach' of the children to the Bible, the Liturgy, and the doctrine of the Sunday Gospels. A few additional pages will appear in the next issue. — Address: Mt. Notre Dame Academy, Reading, Ohio, U. S. A.

<sup>2</sup> Albert J. SHAMON, *Behind the Mass*, Christopher Press Inc., Rochester, New-York, 1949, cf. p. 42.

Of course you don't.

But on Sunday mornings what happens ?

No matter what the weather is, all good Catholics get up and go to Church. Do you know why ?

It is a beautiful story and just as true as it can be. It is the sweetest story ever told. It is the story of the Mass.

Do you want to hear it ? All right, we shall tell it to you. But where shall we begin ? — Let's see.

The Story of the Mass is a love story. Did you ever say to your Mother, " Look, Mother, see how much I love you ? " When Mother looked you stretched out your arms like this (child extends arms) as wide as can be.

That is the story of the Mass. Christ stretched out His Arms and said, " Look, see how much I love you. " <sup>1</sup>

In the infinite opening of the outstretched Arms of Christ we read :

" The Story of the Mass. "

(Group recites) :

The Sacrifice of the Mass is the same sacrifice as the Sacrifice of Jesus when He died on the Cross.

On the Cross Jesus offered Himself to His Father for us.

In the Mass bread and wine are changed into the Body and Blood of Jesus and are offered to God for us.

\* \* \*

(Group recites) :

On Calvary our Lord in anguish died.

Our loving, suffering Lord was crucified.

He offered to His Father up above

The Sacrifice of life, the Offering of Love.

In Holy Mass each day our Blessed Lord

Renews His Sacrifice of Flesh and Blood.

He offers to His Father as before

His Sacrifice of Love, of Love forevermore.

Then, let us go to Mass, to Calvary,

And stand beside the Cross, the Blessed Tree,

And let us join with Him, and offer, too,

Ourselves and all we have in service true.

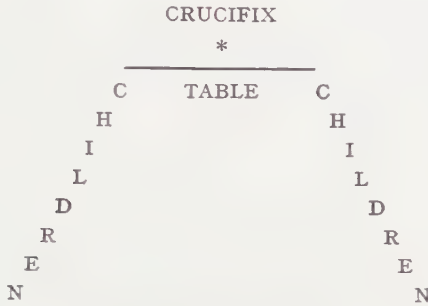
S. N. D. DE N.

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<sup>1</sup> Reverend Gerald ELLARD, S. J. and Reverend Aloysius HEEG, S. J., cf. *Story of the Mass*, Chicago, Illinois, Loyola University Press.

(The group walks to stage. The Readers stand on steps or to the side of stage. On the stage there is a table. On the table there are a chalice, paten, large altar bread, candles, and a ciborium containing small altar breads. These sacred vessels are made of wood and painted gold, or they may be made of glass. The altar breads are made of stiff white paper.)

Diagram :



\* One child stands behind table,  
facing audience.

## THE OFFERTORY

Our Gifts to God.

We offer Bread and Wine.

We offer ourselves.

\* \* \*

READER :

The story of the Mass is a love story. Lovers always give each other presents. A present is a sign of love.

At the Offertory of the Mass we give God a present. In the eve of His Passion Jesus took bread into His holy and adorable Hands.

So, we, too, take bread and offer it to God. We do not go up to the Altar with our gift of bread and wine, candles, or money, as they did centuries ago, but we know that the priest is taking our place. When he offers the bread to God we offer it with him, and with the gift of bread we offer ourselves, our mind, our heart, our will.

At some Masses you will see the Ciborium on the Altar with the Chalice. If the priest needs more little Hosts to give to the people in Holy Communion, you will notice that he has the Ciborium there on the Altar. It is filled with small altar breads or hosts. At the Offertory the priest removes the cover of the ciborium, and offers these small hosts together with the large altar bread on the paten.

(After removing the cover of the Ciborium, the child in the center takes the paten on which is the large Altar Bread. He holds it up as the priest does at Mass. All the children hold up their hands as if they too are offering the bread. All say the prayer.)

“ Receive, O Holy Father, almighty and eternal God, this spotless host, which I, Thine unworthy servant, offer unto Thee, my living and true God, for my own countless sins, offences, and omissions ; likewise for all here present, and for all faithful Christians, living and dead, that it may avail both me and them to salvation, unto life everlasting. Amen. ”

(The children lower their hands ; the child in the center places the paten on the altar. He places the cover on the ciborium.)

READER :

In like manner Jesus took the Chalice into His Holy and adorable Hands.

So we, too, take wine and offer it to God. Into the Chalice the priest has poured wine and a little water. Then he offers it to God.

Again we unite with the priest and offer the gift of wine. With the wine we offer ourselves, our mind, our heart, our will.

(The child in the center raises the Chalice ; all the children raise their hands as if offering the Chalice.)

All say the prayer :

“ We offer unto Thee, O Lord, the Chalice of salvation, beseeching Thy mercy that it may ascend as the fragrance of a sweet perfume before Thy divine majesty, for our own salvation, and for that of the whole world. Amen. ”

(After the prayer the children lower their hands ; the child in the center places the Chalice on the Altar.)

## THE CONSECRATION

Bread and Wine are changed into the Body and Blood of Jesus, and we have :

*The Perfect Gift.*

Jesus offers Himself to the Father.

We offer Jesus to the Father.

We offer ourselves.

\* \* \*



READER :

The Sacrifice of the Mass is a love story. Lovers always give each other presents. A present is a sign of love.

At the Consecration of the Mass we give God the Father a present. This time it is not bread and wine. It is a perfect gift, the Body and Blood of Jesus Christ.

GROUP :

A group of children sing " The Sanctus " of the Alme Pater Mass X from the Kyriale.

READER :

At the Consecration of the Mass the priest does what our Lord Himself did at the Last Supper. He changes bread and wine into the Body and Blood of Christ.

First, the priest uncovers the ciborium so that the little altar breads may be changed into Jesus. Then the priest takes a large altar bread and says, " This is My Body, " and the bread is changed into the Body of Christ.

(Here the chimes are rung. There is no action at the altar.)

He takes the Chalice and says, " This is My Blood, " and the wine is changed into the Blood of Christ.

(Here the chimes are rung. There is no action at the altar.)

GROUP :

A group of children sing " The Benedictus " of the Alme Pater Mass X from the Kyriale.

READER :

Now Jesus offers Himself to the Father for us just as He did on the Cross. We offer to God the Father a perfect gift, His Son, Jesus Christ. With Him we offer ourselves, our mind, our heart, our will. We offer ourselves with Jesus, with all the joys and sorrows of the day to the glory of the Holy Trinity.

GROUP :

On Calvary Our Lord in anguish died.  
Our loving, suffering Lord was crucified.  
He offered to His Father up above  
The Sacrifice of Life, the offering of Love.

In Holy Mass each day our Blessed Lord  
Renews His Sacrifice of Flesh and Blood.  
He offers to His Father as before  
His Sacrifice of Love, of love forevermore.

Then, let us go to Mass, to Calvary,  
And stand beside the Cross, the Blessed Tree,  
And let us join with Him, and offer, too,  
Ourselves and all we have in service true.

S. N. D. DE N.

(The child in the center takes the Host and Chalice and holds them as the priest does for the Minor Elevation. All the children raise their hands as if offering the Host and Chalice.)

All say the following prayer :

“ Wherefore, O Lord, we, Thy servants, and all Thy holy people, calling to mind the blessed Passion of the same Christ, Thy Son, our Lord, also His Resurrection from the dead, and His glorious Ascension into heaven, offer unto Thy sublime majesty, of Thine own gifts bestowed upon us, a pure victim, a holy victim, a spotless victim, the holy Bread of life everlasting, and the Chalice of eternal salvation. ”

(The child in the center places the Host and Chalice on the Altar. All the children lower their hands at the conclusion of the prayer.)

## THE COMMUNION

God the Father gives Jesus to us.

\* \* \*

READER :

We have said that the Sacrifice of the Mass is a Love Story.  
Lovers always give each other presents. A present is a sign of love.  
At the Offertory we give bread and wine.

At the Consecration we give Jesus to His Father, and we give ourselves.

Now in the Communion of the Mass God the Father gives us a gift. He gives Jesus back to us again in Holy Communion.

GROUP :

On Calvary Our Lord in anguish died.  
Our loving, suffering Lord was crucified.  
He offered to His Father up above  
The Sacrifice of life, the offering of love.

In Holy Mass each day our Blessed Lord  
Renews His Sacrifice of Flesh and Blood.  
He offers to His Father as before  
His Sacrifice of Love, of love forevermore.

Then, let us go to Mass, to Calvary,  
And stand beside the Cross, the Blessed Tree,  
And let us join with Him, and offer, too,  
Ourselves and all we have in service true.

S. N. D. DE N.

READER :

At the Communion of the Mass the priest takes the Sacred Host,  
— (The child in the center takes the Host, that is, he holds it in his hand.)

GROUP :

“ I will take the Bread of Heaven and I will call upon the name of the Lord. Lord, I am not worthy that Thou shouldst enter under my roof ; but only say the word, and my soul shall be healed. ”  
(Children strike breast.)

READER :

Then the priest receives Holy Communion. He receives the Sacred Host.

(Child in center raises the Host a little.)

GROUP :

“ May the Body of our Lord Jesus Christ keep my soul unto life everlasting. Amen. ”

READER :

The priest receives the Precious Blood from the Chalice. (Child in center raises the Chalice a little.)

GROUP :

“ What shall I return to the Lord for all He has given to me ? I will take the Chalice of salvation and will call upon the name of the Lord. I will call upon Him, and praise Him, and I shall be saved from my enemies. ”

“ May the Blood of our Lord Jesus Christ keep my soul unto life everlasting. ” Amen.

READER :

God the Father wishes to give Jesus to us, too. The priest takes the Ciborium, —

(Child in center uncovers the Ciborium and holds a small Host.)

READER :

And we may go to the Communion Table and receive Jesus. As we receive the Sacred Host the priest says :

GROUP :

“ May the Body of our Lord Jesus Christ keep thy soul unto life everlasting. Amen. ”

## CONCLUSION

ITE MISSA EST

We live the Mass.

\* \* \*

READER :

This is the love story of the Mass.

The priest says, “ Ite, Missa Est. ” Go, the Mass is over.

But, our Mass, the Mass of our lives, of our love, is not over. When we leave the church, we carry in our hearts and in our lives all that the Mass has taught us and given us, — and we begin to prepare our gifts for the next Offering, the next Sacrifice of Love, the Love Story of the Mass.

GROUP :

*Ite Missa Est.*

Now, go, for the Mass is ended,  
And Christ's Offering is complete.

But, go you are sent, you are missioned,  
Go, bring the world to His Feet.

Cast out the seeds of cowardice,  
Purge out your pride, and its yeast,

Go, seek the Bread for the Supper!  
Go, seek the Wine for the Feast!

Trade at the counter of duty,  
Trade till your trifles are sold.

Come with your purse filled with silver!  
Come with your purse filled with gold!

Come to the Feast, to the Supper!  
Come in the dawn and be fed.

Offer your gold and your silver!  
Offer your wine and your bread!

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# How to Introduce Children and Adults to the Mystery of the Mass

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Our redemption is achieved by our participation in the Eucharist : Christ, the eternal Victim, is present in the Mass ; He takes us with Him and in Him along His Way of renunciation and death to introduce us into the glory of the Father.<sup>2</sup>

If we have, therefore, a certain amount of understanding of the Eucharistic mystery, we possess the key of all religious knowledge. As the Mass is at the heart of Christian life, so the catechesis of the Mass controls all catechesis.

The Mass is not loved enough. Many Christians desert it ; adolescents, pupils of our Catholic institutions, often look upon it as a burden and some among them, at the end of their schooling, announce that they will free themselves from an obligation which they have unwillingly undergone for so long. These Christians, these adolescents, have little love for the Mass because they hardly understand it ; sometimes by their own fault, sometimes also by the fault and clumsiness of their teachers.

Two ways lead to the knowledge of the Mass : listening to a commentary, and participation in it. The two things should be closely linked and looked upon as complementary to one another. To make our thought clear, let us consider successively what the commentary on the Mass and participation in it ought to be.

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<sup>2</sup> Even those who are saved without having taken a visible part in the Eucharist share in it invisibly. For, as the visible Church is visibly or invisibly the door of salvation, so the Eucharist, the heart of the living Church, is visibly or invisibly the source of all sanctification.

## I. COMMENTARY ON THE MASS

We note two opposite tendencies in the numerous methods of initiation into knowledge of the Mass. We will attempt to describe their most extreme characteristics before suggesting our own point of view.

1. — *Some catechists are, quite rightly, anxious to give to children, as to the faithful, a knowledge of all the essential aspects of the mystery of the Mass. But they believe that the best means of communicating this knowledge is to make the child memorize a clear, complete and abstract formula of the mystery, after it has been explained to him. They believe that this formula should group together and fit into one another such serious theological expressions as sacrifice, the new law, expiation, immolation, victim, vicarious satisfaction, etc.*

Children who are not destitute of memory nor of quickness of mind retain these formulae and understand their meaning rather in the same way that they understand the explanation of a problem or theorem. They seldom "realize" anything of the mystery which the formulae signify, and the bond between these redoubtable definitions, heavy with strange words, and their parochial or school Mass escapes them. Devout Christians assiduous at attending Eucharistic celebrations, experience also a kind of uneasiness at not being able to associate the theoretical lesson which they have retained and accepted respectfully with the celebrations towards which they are attracted by their love of God.

Some Christians are less fortunate in their attitude to this trial. They become uneasily conscious of the divorce between the reality and the too technical explanation, and one day, worn out by the effort of vainly trying to tame this spiritual hedgehog, they end by losing interest in the Mass itself.

2. — *Other catechists are chiefly concerned with adapting themselves to the limited capacities of the children and the faithful. They therefore believe that initiation to the Mass should be progressive and that only those aspects which can be grasped by the child's psychology or that of the man in the street should be first set before them.*

They therefore dwell upon the idea that the Mass is a meal; sometimes it is presented as being a brotherly repast to which Christ comes to seal the friendship which unites those taking part. Christ's offering is compared to the present which the eldest of a

family brings to the father in the name of all the children and which the father in his turn share with his offspring. The great danger here is to trudge along on the human level. Those children or adults who have thoroughly understood the family idea suggested to them do not always arrive at what is behind it and fail to sense the mystery of God. The attempt is made to go further by reminding them that at the Mass Christians assemble as to a feast, a fraternal banquet, and that Christ coming among them presents them to His Father and leads them to the joy of the Kingdom. But here again, the idea of Sacrifice is absent : the glory of the Kingdom appears, but the Cross has faded away and there is the risk that it will never be perceived as being at the heart of the mystery of the Mass.

3. — *As we see it, the Mass should be presented by taking the following into account ;*

a) *That none of the essential aspects of the Mass — the presence of the passion, death and resurrection of Christ — should be omitted or suppressed.*

b) *That the sacramental aspect (communion) and the sacrificial side should be closely linked.*<sup>1</sup> *The glorious eternity which is commenced in the union with Christ in communion is only possible through the death of the Lord and our own sacrifice.*

c) *That at once, in a very definite manner, the idea should be imparted of the eternal and glorious end to which the Mass is orientated ; the Kingdom of Heaven already foreshadowed in communion.*

d) *That the exposition of the deeper aspects of the Mass should be linked with their ritual expression.* This will help Christians to rediscover, each time that they are present at Mass, the meaning of the words and gestures.

e) *That the first initiation to the Mass should not take the form of a didactic lesson, but of progressive and occasional touches, in the manner of parents transmitting precious family traditions to their children.*

*Taking into account what we have just written, the following is the broad outline of the commentary which we prefer :*

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<sup>1</sup> We often say to First Communicants : " You are going to receive Jesus in your heart. " Afterwards we talk about the Mass. Is the necessary union of the two realities grasped properly ?

At the moment of communion, the priest gives each of the faithful who approaches the Holy Table a piece of consecrated bread which is Christ, the risen Lord now living on the Father's right hand in Heaven. Jesus, close to each communicant and gathering them all together in Him, with the saints already glorified, offers them to the Father in Himself.

The gathering of the communicants and those uniting themselves to them, is still an earthly assembly, but it is already a heavenly one in a certain sense, for it is one with the only Son before the Father.

The communicants are side by side and seem separate, but yet they are one, for a single host gathers them together :

— They are sinners, but have holiness already in them ;

— They are mortal, but have immortality in them ;

— They are weak, but the strength of the Almighty transfigures them ;

— They are in the midst of shadows, but the light of God is lit up in their hearts ;

— They are far from God, but Jesus leads them to the Father.

In Jesus Christ, the most obedient Son, the communicants, and with them, the whole Church, are given to the Father.

When they leave the church, they must behave like citizens of Heaven among men, or, take heavenly manners with them.

Do the indisputable statements which we have just made set aside the sacrificial aspect of the Mass (Christ's death) and isolate communion from the consecration ?

Not at all, for the following points must immediately be brought out :

If the risen Lord is present to the communicating assembly, He has not simply descended from Heaven in the manner of a king who comes from his capital to make a joyful entry among his people : His presence is connected with a mystery of death ; the aspect of glory is inseparable from that of renunciation.

Christ's death is not renewed at each Mass, for the risen Christ no longer dies ; but the Eucharistic Sacrifice which commemorates the passion of Christ associates Christians with it. Transsubstantiation in particular represents the death of Christ, not only by the separation of the species of bread and wine which are the image of the Body and Blood separated, but because the bread and wine, our fragile offering which after the offertory is the image of Christ, cease to be bread and wine, die, so to speak, in a mysterious passage, a mysterious ' conversion, ' to become the glorious Christ. The consecration therefore recalls the dolorous ' passage ' of Christ and renders present the Lord eternally obedient even beyond death.



We see the journey formerly accomplished, as if in a faint outline : when the Son of God willed to save men, He asked of them, through the intermediary of Our Lady, for a fragile and mortal body, He assumed a humanity allied to our sinful humanity, and made Himself truly one of us, our Brother ; so that sinful men should share in His own holiness, He passed through death ; He accepted that His humanity should be hidden, His body destroyed by death, so as to rise again in a new life of glory and holiness.<sup>1</sup>

The Mass recalls and renders present the sacrifice of Christ.<sup>2</sup>

It would be vain to try to give children an understanding of the Mass by teaching the foregoing in their lessons. It should be set before them on various occasions, dwelling sometimes on one aspect, sometimes on another. Normally, the first teaching on the Mass belongs to the mother. Going to or returning from church, during the Holy Sacrifice, sometimes in the course of the day, a word thrown out in passing or a short allusion will throw light upon one or another point. For an initiation like this to be possible, the first condition is that the parents themselves should have a personal knowledge of the Mass and not merely the superficial comprehension of theological formulae. The second condition is to link the commentary with liturgical participation. We will now suggest what are the points which priests and teachers should bear in mind when bringing children and adolescents to Mass.

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<sup>1</sup> It is not perhaps always sufficiently noticed how, thanks to Jesus immolated for our sins, corporal death (Christ's and ours) is the efficient sign of our conversion from sin to grace. By sin, in fact, our personality has been marked by a deep stain ; for to accept sin is to contradict by voluntary choice God's call, falsify the essential upspringing of the soul and immobilize our being in an absurd falling back upon ourselves. Conversion, that is to say, the passage from sin to grace, cannot consist in making a good action succeed a bad one. Our actions, indeed, are not only peripheral manifestations without repercussion on the hidden depths of our being, for our free activity consists in letting the creative gesture of God pass across our liberty, in forming with Him or in deforming, His work, that is to say, ourselves. Conversion presupposes to a certain extent a new creation ; the deformed being must be destroyed so that a new being may rise conformed to God's design. This destruction followed by renewal is not however possible and efficient unless God is the author of it and unless He Himself, served by our liberty, recreates what He had called to life. The providential plan has been that Our Lord, the Man-God, precedes men in this itinerary. Since Christ's death, all human death (prepared by the renunciations of life) can be the efficacious sign of an interior transfiguration and the passage from spiritual death to life with God.

<sup>2</sup> Christ does not repeat at each Mass the dolorous passage accomplished once for all, but He remains eternally in an attitude of offering before the Father. This attitude contains in a superlative degree the preceding stages of His sacrifice.

## II. PARTICIPATION IN THE MASS

No commentaries are possible without expressive celebrations. We have more than once heard parents regret the absence of dignity and beauty in the Masses to which they have to bring their children. We have also heard a parish priest reply to a parishioner who wished to *see* the sacred ceremonies better : “ But you *know* what is taking place ” (that is, ‘ It is useless to see what one knows ’).

We must ask ourselves under what conditions a celebration of Mass can be at once respectful of the rules laid down by the Church and give a visible manifestation of something of the mystery of Christ.

A major difficulty to which we must respectfully submit, is the celebration of the Mass in Latin. It is obvious that to teach the faithful in a language they do not know, and to ask them to associate themselves with prayers which they do not understand, poses a serious problem.

In spite of this basic difficulty, it seems to us that a real participation can be attained if four conditions are observed.

I. — *The setting in which Mass is celebrated should express the mystery.* — It is greatly to be desired that this setting should help to create a respectful disposition and interior simplification in the souls of the faithful.

In this sense, the superabundance of statues and pious pictures (those little artificial, feminine and childish paradises which too many convent chapels are) is disastrous. This superabundance creates distractions and is nauseating when it does not encourage a spiritual childishness.

On the contrary, a Mass in the open air in a natural setting (mountainous horizon for instance) can evoke in a vivid manner, especially among young people and children, the splendour of God’s reign in creation and how all things should be offered to Him.

The normal setting should be a church or chapel whose simple and bare lines encourage the inner simplicity required to approach God.

Particular attention must be given to the altar. Its central position in the church reminds us of Christ’s presence in the midst of His people.

It is said that the celebrant’s position with his back to the people shows the role of the priest separated from the world and walking to God at the head of his flock. It is also said that it encourages the recollection of the celebrant who is not distracted by the congre-

gation. Some do not find these reasons convincing ; if we think of the Last Supper which is the model for our Masses, we see Christ turned towards His apostles sharing the bread with them ; as for the fear of distractions, it may be remarked that the teacher is not distracted by the pupils whom he faces, nor the foreman by his fellow workers, and also that the priest is sustained in his rise to God and his charity to his neighbour by seeing the crowd of his brothers associated in his sacerdotal work.

2. — *A living community.* — The mutual charity of those attending should be the visible sign of the assembly of Christians in Christ. This sign should be perceptible even to children. We must therefore take care to form a real community, and not merely a crowd. With children, this can be done, either by letting them come to Mass with their parents, or by forming little groups animated by a truly family spirit.

3. — *The primacy of the celebrant should be well stressed and the role of the faithful should be clearly subordinate to him.* — For the sake of interesting the children we run the risk of adopting two disputable solutions :

— The first is to separate the congregation from the celebrant ; in this case, without taking any notice of what is happening at the altar, we strive to keep the children's attention by the recitation of the rosary, by pious readings or hymns which have only a distant connection with the Mass ;

— The second is to be careful to keep the contact, but to a certain degree to subordinate the celebrant to the leader.

To avoid these inconveniences, the two following points should be observed :

— Let the leader's actions closely follow the rites and prayers which are being performed at the altar.

— As far as possible, let the celebrant intone and conclude the prayers said by the congregation in their mother tongue. If for instance, a reader says the text of the prayer in French, he should not begin till the celebrant has been heard to say aloud " Oremus " and he should let the latter conclude " Per Dominum," etc.

— *An active participation should be required of the congregation.*

It would be naïve to expect children to " realize " that they are " actors " in the sacred drama if simple and practical activities, symbolic of their spiritual activity, are not required of them. What can these activities be ?

— The chief and most usual would consist in answering the priest

(in Latin) ; it would be easy, even with still young children, to make them understand the meaning of the short responses : *Amen, et cum spiritu tuo*, etc.

— Hymns (translation of the psalms in connection with the liturgy of the day, hymns appropriate to the various stages of the Mass) will be alternated on feast days by soloists and by the congregation ; it is advisable not to impose anything too difficult on the latter, as this would be harmful to the success of the ceremony.

— If children of 11 or 12 are present, several of them could be trusted with the reading in the vulgar tongue of the principal passages of the Proper and sometimes some of the prayers in the Ordinary (the translations may be abridged).

— Varied attitudes will punctuate the different phases of the Mass : standing, kneeling, sitting...

— At more solemn Masses processions will be arranged : entrance and exit, offering of hosts, the singing of a psalm or canticle expressing the meaning of these movements.

This is how a Mass for children and parents on the occasion of a First Communion can be organized. The following phases require special actions :

— Parents and children assemble at the presbytery or the entrance to the church : they are headed by the cross and two acolytes, the children walk two by two, brought up in the rear by the priest surrounded by acolytes. A choir sings a psalm of hope and joy ; all take up the antiphon (Oh Lord our God, how great is Thy Name... Come to the Lord with songs of praise...).

— Each time the priest blesses the congregation or starts a dialogue, all answer in Latin (Amen ; Gloria tibi, Domine ; Deo gratias, etc.).

— Each time the priest reads a text of the Proper, a reader, after a short introduction, reads the chief passages or a very faithful short translation.

— After the Gospel the priest briefly reminds those present of the meaning of the ceremony, addressing first the children, then the parents.

At the Offertory, before the offering of bread, the communicants come and place their hosts on the paten. During this, a canticle or psalm is sung.

— At the time of the Memento, the priest stops and a reader presents the intentions of the congregation.

— Before the Communion, the little communicants say aloud a short extract carefully chosen from the prayers before communion.



The parents then promise to continue the religious training of their children.

— During the reception of Holy Communion, a canticle or psalm is sung.

— At the end of the Mass, the priest gives back to the little communicants the candles they brought with them and which have been burning during the ceremony ; the procession reforms as before the Mass and the priest is conducted back to the sacristy down the aisles of the church or the corridors of the convent, while a psalm of thanksgiving, a hymn to Our Lady, or litanies are sung.

## CONCLUSION

The Eucharistic mystery is at the heart of the Church's life and the centre of Christian destiny. Its inner reality ought to be seen through the outward signs. An attempt should be made to achieve this both by our teaching and through the liturgical actions themselves.

As regards the teaching, there are two traps to be avoided :

— a too early presentation of abstract technical formulae and techniques which, in spite of their completeness, many cannot assimilate ;

— a lingering over minor aspects of the Mass at the risk of failing to rise to the mystical and supernatural plane.

A presentation will therefore be adopted which, while at once introducing the children to the heart of the mystery, organizes and unifies the various aspects starting from a culminating point.

Especially at the beginning, care will be taken to use a casual method and to associate practice with teaching.

With regard to participation, the following points will be insisted upon :

— The realization of a truly liturgical community ;

— Concordance between congregation and priest ;

— Various activities expressive of the deep part which the faithful take in the Holy Sacrifice.

We may hope that it will become increasingly easy for the young Christian of good will to realize the fulness of the Christian mystery while participating in the Mass.

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# INTERNATIONAL SURVEY

## I. — THE LITURGICAL MOVEMENT IN VARIOUS COUNTRIES

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### *Belgium.*

Since the last war the Belgian liturgical movement has taken a somewhat different appearance. It has been written that the movement in Belgium was losing speed, in a state of crisis, that it no longer played the part or exercised the influence, generally speaking, that it had for many years before the war.

It is therefore useful to attempt an analysis of the balance sheet of the ten last years to discover the new directions which have been taken, compare with those existing before 1940, and form a judgment as to the value of the present activity. Our analysis will bear on the different sectors of a fairly complex movement, and we will try to draw some lessons from it.

### *The Reviews.*

The Belgian liturgical movement has kept, from its golden age, a very wide and almost complete network of reviews.

The erudition which before the war (one might almost say, before the 1914 war) was concentrated in the *Revue Bénédictine* of Maredsous no longer feeds only one review. The studies of the all too rare Belgian scholars are scattered among different periodicals, both Belgian and foreign. Nothing is lost for all that, and the Belgian scientific researches often benefit by a larger clientèle and a more efficient audience.

Three Belgian reviews specialize in the pastoral sphere and that of liturgical spirituality all three having been in existence for more than thirty years. For the Flemish part of the country, they are: *Tijdschrift voor Liturgie* (Abbaye d'Affligem), *Questions Liturgiques et Paroissiales* (Abbaye de Mont-César) and *Paroisse et Liturgie* (Abbaye de Saint-André). Many foreigners are surprised at there being three reviews of this kind in one small country. This is justified, however, by the fact that each covers a different ground and by their large circulation abroad. The first mentioned is the official organ in Dutch of the liturgical movement and has practically

as many subscribers in Belgium as in Holland. The scope of its excellent articles extends from erudition to popularization and to spirituality. The second review also has as many subscribers in Belgium as abroad ; besides its articles on doctrine and the pastorate, it publishes a regular bibliographical bulletin summarizing all the important contributions to liturgical science and the pastorate (more than 1,000 titles a year). It is the only review of this kind in French. Finally, the third review is noted especially for its articles on the pastorate ; its diffusion is international, for only one-sixth of its subscribers are Belgian.

The work of the two last-mentioned reviews is supported by two centres of documentation which are particularly well supplied, the first in liturgical works, the second dealing with the Bible and Liturgy.

A loss of impetus cannot then be imputed to the Belgian liturgical reviews : their influence is considerable in the country and abroad and their circulation must be large, since one of them counts more than 7,000 subscribers.

These reviews are meant exclusively for the parochial clergy and we must recognize that we lack a periodical for the laity. About 1930 Dom Gaspard Lefebvre filled this gap by publishing the *Bulletin paroissial liturgique*, which ended by attracting more priests than laity and took the title of *Paroisse et Liturgie*. It is particularly difficult at present to think of starting a liturgical review for the laity. We will speak later of the ground which the liturgical movement is gaining among them, but until there are further developments, it seems that an adaptation of the existing reviews would fulfil the needs of those among the laity who are attracted to an authentic liturgical life. At present the reviews patronized by the laity are concerning themselves increasingly with liturgical and parochial life, and this in itself compensates for the lack of a special periodical.

Several reviews have devoted themselves to a particular section of the liturgy and in its spirit seek the solution of the special problems which they encounter. With regard to religious art, there is *Art d'Église* (Abbaye de Saint-André), which has succeeded the pre-War *Artisan liturgique*. Its issues constitute catalogues of works of art which are particularly suggestive for the revival in religious art. The review *Musica Sacra*, supported by the Malines school of sacred music, assists parochial choirs in gregorian chant (interpreted apart from the principles of Solesmes) and in polyphony (in which several Belgian priests are distinguished). In the sphere of catechetical teaching, we may mention the supplement *Notre Catéchèse* to *Paroisse et Liturgie*, and also *Croisade Liturgique à l'École*, edited by Dom Gaspard Lefebvre. Both aim at providing catechetical teaching in general and the catechism in particular with schemes inspired by the liturgy.

There is also the bulletin *Custos* for sacristans, which includes liturgical spirituality as well as professional recommendations. (This bulletin was started on the occasion of the international congress of sacristans at Bruges in 1954), and the *Cahiers de la Vigne* (Béguinage, Bruges) intended for parochial auxiliaries.

This simple enumeration, to which may be added a series of periodicals of general interest which give a large place to the liturgy ; *Lumen Vitae*,



*Évangéliser, Bible et Vie chrétienne, Sacerdos*, etc., show that the Belgian publications are in a flourishing state. In their new garb they adapt themselves to the new circumstances of the after-war period, thus ensuring to themselves a larger field of action, and an international circulation which fits in well with the characteristics of the Belgian movement.

#### *Missals.*

Belgium was for a long time the Promised Land of missals. If the Grand Duchy of Luxemburg is added, we may say that up to 1940 all the standard missals in every language (except German) were published in Belgium. Dom Lefebvre's Missal, the first of its kind, that of Mont-César, of Clervaux, Afflighem (in Flemish) and those of the publishing houses of Desclée, Brépols, etc., widely distributed before the war have not lost any of their importance even since each country, and France in particular, has increased its own editions. Constantly revised and improved, most of the large Belgian missals are of the standard type: increasingly faithful translations of the Bible and liturgical texts, commentaries on the characteristics of the liturgical passages and a new tendency to develop certain sections of the missal, thus gradually making it into a book which the devout Christian will willingly turn to for meditation and prayer: appropriate selected Biblical readings, a guide to meditation on the liturgy, etc. In this way, important ways of sharing in the liturgical life are being constantly perfected and contribute to the development of the liturgical spirit among the faithful. The missal has, however, its limits. Even although it is becoming usual for those making their Solemn Communion to receive a missal as a present, a recent enquiry among a group of Belgian parishes has shown that the missal is not used by a sixth of those attending Sunday Mass. It does not appear that this proportion can be greatly increased, even by adopting a more popular type of missal, as has been done in France. A certain number of parishes have made the experiment of distributing pamphlets, often composed by the parish priest himself (like those of the Abbé Peters, published by *Liturgie vivante* in Liège), or provided by an association like "Documents et Tracts" (Pastorijstraat, 23, Antwerp). These parishes have found that this has caused a decided improvement in the participation by the congregation in the Mass, but this hardly compensates for some major defects of this kind of pamphlet. We shall see later that the participation of the faithful in the liturgy can be obtained without any missal or pamphlet, and that those parishes which are succeeding in this are most certainly succeeding in obtaining a living and communal celebration.

#### *Meetings.*

The *Liturgical Weeks* organized before the war by Mont-César, both in Dutch and French, sometimes at Louvain, sometimes in another town, have largely contributed to the development of the liturgical movement in Belgium and its diffusion abroad. Many of the congresses now taking place

abroad refer to the conclusions and directions already adopted thirty years ago in these *Liturgical Weeks*. In 1949, a *Week* of a limited character was held at Mont-César on the reform of the breviary; this was to be the last.

If these *Liturgical Weeks* were one of the most representative features of the Belgian liturgical movement, and if we may hope to see them renewed in another form in the not too-distant future, other points of contact which have been no less efficient have compensated for their disappearance.

The Abbey of Mont-César has re-instated, since 1953, the weekly courses on liturgy for priests and students of Louvain University. Specializing more and more in this domain of instruction on the liturgy, the same Abbey organized a series of study meetings for liturgical teachers in 1954, and these will be repeated in 1955; numerous French and Belgian seminaries and theological institutions sent their liturgical professors. The lectures are given by the specialists from Mont-César and the French C. P. L.

For its part, *Paroisse et Liturgie* has organized a number of meetings for the discussion of the liturgical pastorate. These meetings are arranged at the Prieuré of the Bénédictines de la Roseraie at Uccle or in various Walloon parishes. They are organized in collaboration with *Lumen Vitae* and the speeches are published in the "Cahiers de la Roseraie." Sometimes it is the teachers from the middle schools who meet together, sometimes preachers, sometimes members of the parochial clergy. The last, in particular, form two particularly alive teams who are courageously undertaking the study of all the problems of the liturgical pastorate and applying the solutions arrived at in common in their parishes. When these experiments have been entirely tried out they will be able, no doubt, to be extended in the diocese and will then form a real leaven of life and progress. Several parishes have in this way acquired a well merited notoriety for the communal spirit of their services and for the revival in some spheres of the pastorate.

Lately, important meetings of the laity have been increasing in number. They are becoming more and more desirous of sharing in a live liturgy, are watching the interesting experiments already taking place, wish for instruction on these matters and are gradually convincing their priests of the advantage of a revival of certain forms of participation in the services. Perhaps it is here that the Belgian liturgical movement will show most progress in the immediate future. The liturgy will come to be no longer a Benedictine monopoly, nor the affair of the priest alone, but the life itself of the Church and of the parochial community.

Although less spectacular than the *Liturgical Weeks* of the past, this movement towards meetings is none the less real and its work is of the highest quality. Carried on among a "select few," it is discreetly preparing for a thorough revival in our parishes.

#### *The Official Character of the Movement.*

Following on the encyclical *Mediator Dei*, each Belgian diocese has formed a committee of the liturgical pastorate charged with the surveillance in each diocese of the manner in which liturgical regulations are observed, and with

the promotion of a revival in the participation of the faithful. The work of these committees varies very much from one diocese to another, but comparisons are out of place here. It would be desirable, in order to give the Belgian liturgical movement a solid framework, to collect in a national body, on the level of the country as a whole, these different committees, doubling them by representatives of extradiocesan organizations. This scheme has not been realizable and that is perhaps why the Belgian liturgical movement, although as much alive as before the war, has not an exterior front in proportion to its activity and has no official representative. While waiting for the problem to mature, several bishops have taken decisions, in their own dioceses, in line with the principles of the liturgical movement and have shown themselves to be favourable to certain experiments undertaken by one or another of their parish priests. We may mention in particular various initiatives of a pastorate of the Mass inaugurated at Liège and at Bruges, as a result of a Lenten Pastoral by the bishops of the two dioceses, in the course of this year.

As a matter of fact, the authority of the Belgian liturgical movement rests entirely on the authority of its principal leaders. We may take the opportunity of drawing attention to the important part Dom Lambert Beauduin has played in it; the year 1954, which marked the golden jubilee of his monastic profession was an occasion for estimating the influence of the thought and the fruits of the abounding activity of this great monk.

#### *Tendencies.*

It can clearly be seen from an enquiry into the various aspects of the Belgian liturgical movement that its vitality has not diminished since the war, quite the contrary. A certain official character is lacking at the moment, and that is enough to explain the apparent slumber which several observers are commenting upon, and which is not without creating problems for those who dream of a general liturgical revival in Belgium. But time is on their side and the experiments which a select few are carrying out will no doubt prepare the way for a new and efficient advance.

On the ground of these experiments, we should like to point out some tendencies which can be observed among Belgian liturgists. We should be giving a wrong impression if we let it be understood that they are already noticeable in many parishes; all the same, they make themselves felt in increasingly generalized experiments and seem to be well on the way to becoming one day norms for the liturgical movement. We must add that these tendencies contain almost nothing that is specifically Belgian; they come from the common fount of life which animates the Church almost everywhere in the West in our day.

1. *The convergence of the Biblical and Liturgical movements.* — It is significant to note that the parish priests who are deliberately attempting a revised liturgical pastorate give an important place to the Word of God. The pre-Mass of the parochial services is arranged to become a real proclamation

of the Word of God to the community assembled to listen to it. They also emphasize the bond between the liturgy of the Word and of the Sacrifice, the commentary underlining the connection between the two. Finally, they look upon all the extra-liturgical services as celebrations of the Word, ending with an evocative rite. The most expressive testimony to this method seems to be HEUSCHEN, *Deux célébrations de la Semaine Sainte* (Ed. Apostolat Liturgique, Bruges), the biblical vigils described in *Lumière et Vie*, the supplement to *Paroisse et Liturgie*, as well as the parallel attempt undertaken by the review *Bible et Vie chrétienne*. The reception of this proclamation of the Word by parochial communities is very moving; it bears witness to the need of simple souls for a solid and divine nourishment.

2. *The Liturgy is for the initiated.* — The main anxiety of many parish priests when they are organizing a liturgical feast is to “collect a crowd.” This preoccupation is certainly truly missionary and apostolic, but it embroils matters. If the liturgy is celebrated in order to “collect a crowd,” there will surely be a tendency to give a popular aspect to the liturgical ceremony, so as to attract the “crowd” invited; the liturgy will be emptied of its penetrating force and its solid nourishment. One of the principles revived by the priests who are carrying out parochial experiments is the necessity of keeping the liturgy properly so-called and the biblical vigils for Christians who are spiritually apt for them (which does not necessarily mean intellectual). This necessity brings another in its train: the development of a special section of the pastorate for progressively educating the Christians who belong to the “crowd” to take part in the liturgy by means of meetings for progressive catechesis a catechumenal initiation. In emphasizing that the liturgy is really for the initiates, we do not want, at any price, to make of it a cult of the ghetto. By its very essence, the liturgy celebrated with thoroughness is a missionary undertaking and commits the celebrant and his community to bearing witness.

3. *The value of the pastorate in liturgy.* — One of the chief difficulties which the liturgical movement meets with in Belgium comes from a certain distrust on the part of many of the clergy. It is too often imagined that the liturgy is a matter for specialists, the application of historical studies or a mania on the part of aesthetic priests. It is incontestable that there have been abuses in this direction; priests too much concerned with rubrics and decorum to the extent of neglecting completely the importance of the fruits of the service in the parish. But it must be pointed out that those who are intent on rediscovering the most pastoral lines of the liturgy inevitably meet the findings of historical and doctrinal research: the type of service to which they are spontaneously inclined, owing to their pastoral experience, fits in with and corroborates scientific conclusions. It is therefore most important that the specialists in the pastorate should be at the head of the liturgical movement, for the liturgy is the Christian people's prayer and its salvation through its Head. A liturgical reform which merely returned to the formulae of the past or was systematized around a theological doctrine



would not bear the fruits which we have a right to expect. The parish priests want the certainty that their desire would be the point of departure for the looked-for reform. We must not, for all that, give in to those who would like a simplification of the liturgy which would drag it down to the level of their lukewarm and untrained Christians. It is those who have already constituted a living community around the altar who feel the most need of a liturgical reform which would allow them to appease the hunger of people avid to taste the solid nourishment of the Word and the Sacraments. It is a joy to find that the number of parishes or communities of this nature in existence is beginning to grow.

4. *The living language in the liturgy.* — The French-Latin biblical ritual has not yet been introduced into all the Belgian dioceses which could make use of it. The lack could soon be made up were the Belgian liturgical movement to take on the official character mentioned above. While awaiting a progress which is greatly hoped for numerous priests are using to the maximum, where this is permitted, the living language in their services. Biblical vigils in particular, the course of which joins the broad lines of the pre-Mass, are performed entirely in French; they accustom the faithful to this new style of service and prove that it is possible to use the current tongue in the assemblies of the "People of God." It is the ardent desire of many priests to be allowed to celebrate the liturgy itself in French, so that the faithful may be in better communion with the altar and that a better expression of the sacramental signs may be attained. The French undertaking of a repertory of French chants and psalms has been largely welcomed in Belgium. The "fiches de chants français" distributed by a review of liturgical pastoral has spread into a number of parishes and easily renews the religious repertory of the faithful, gradually raising it to the level of a liturgical repertory. A parallel attempt is being made in Flemish: parishes and schools have obtained the first psalms translated in Dutch. We may also note that a formula for the celebration of the Mass is becoming more widespread: the *low mass solemnized* in the course of which, while the celebrant carries out in their entirety the rubrics of an ordinary low mass, the faithful sing the essential parts in French: the processional chants (Introit, Offertory, Communion, Postcommunion) and the chants which follow the lessons (Gradual, Alleluia). It is only gradually that a parish can arrive at this form of celebration, but it is undeniable that it brings together all those who are attending Mass and obtains a degree of participation that neither missals nor pamphlets have achieved up to now. It would certainly seem that this is the formula for the future.<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> We should here underline the œcumenical bearing of the liturgical revival as we have just described it. The return to the liturgy of the Word, the introduction of the living language and the formula of the solemn low mass are so many stages which impress our separated brethren, for their part eager to rediscover more sacramentalism. It is not by chance that the founder of the Belgian liturgical movement is at the same time the initiator of the œcumenical centre of Chevetogne.

*Conclusion.*

The Belgian liturgical movement is not asleep and it is not unworthy of the impulse given to it by Dom Lambert Beauduin. No great harm is being done if for the moment it is lacking exterior and official vitality. Those who are working now to put into practice the formulae of the liturgical pastorate and to examine their experiences from every angle are doubtless preparing for a future which is likely to have very encouraging features ; too many priests and faithful are now hungering for solid and substantial nourishment.

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*France.*

If we wish to speak of the liturgical movement in France, the term *liturgical pastorate* comes spontaneously to the lips. This is no accident ; it is opportune to comment upon it.

No doubt, there is no " French liturgy " which is pastoral in the sense that it differs from all others. There is only one liturgy, that of the Church, and scholars and priests are increasingly coming to agree in recognizing its pastoral character. The consensus of opinion of those present at the international Congress at Lugano (September 1953) was significant from that point of view. There is, besides, nothing new in the statement : it is simply the rediscovery of an aspect of the Church's tradition which has been somewhat forgotten. The *motu proprio Tra le sollicitudini* of Pius X was responsible to a great extent for this attempt, which was made chiefly first by the Belgian, then by the German, liturgical movements, and which was, so to speak, consecrated by the encyclical *Mediator Dei* by His Holiness Pius XII and the decisions which have followed it : the re-establishment of the Paschal Vigil, the concession of bilingual rituals, the constitution *Christus Dominus* on the Eucharistic fast and evening masses.

On the other hand, the liturgical movement in France is already long-standing : the trail had been blazed by the pioneer, Dom Guéranger, the work of the monks of Solesmes in the restoration of the gregorian chant and various initiatives on the part of fervent liturgists.

The pastoral note however seems to be the dominant characteristic of the French liturgical revival, and this is relatively recent. To illustrate our meaning we will trace back its origins.

During the years 1943-45 there was a growing and acute awareness of the dechristianization of France. Abbé Godin's book, *France pays de mission*, which made a sensation, had much to do with this : it crystallized and defined the anxiety felt by the parish priests or the chaplains of Catholic Action who were in contact with the masses. At this same time, the voice of Fr.

Doncœur (who between the two wars had contributed so much to give back to young people the sense, among other Christian values, of the liturgy) was raised again. The same thing was being said by both : Churchworship is in fact no longer either the vehicle or the nourishment of the people's faith.

Efforts by Youth Movements — in particular, scouting and JOC — had helped to awaken the sensibility of many of the young as to this point ; but this was only a very partial solution. Some parishes also, especially in the working-class suburbs, tried to span the gulf separating the people from the liturgy. During these Liberation years, many initiatives were taken, called for by the exigencies of the moment ; but because they often lacked the faculty of taking a long view, and competence, these innovations, these paraliturgies, did not always avoid the danger of anarchy and fantasy : Where is the Church's liturgy ?

Faced by this profusion of experiments and researches, many lovers of the liturgy were disconcerted. According to their speciality or their temperament, they had admired the historic evocation of a golden age, the harmonious beauty of a cult entirely directed to God, the rigorous precision of detailed rubrics : it all seemed very far from the practical problems of the priest in a missionary parish who has to keep his congregation together with the means at his disposal.

On both sides it was felt that there was more and better to do than to criticize or condemn : work must be undertaken in common. This was the origin of the *Centre for Liturgical Pastorate* (C. P. L.). From the beginning, it grouped together the different opinions, from the most specialist scholar to the most harassed parish priest. It was to be a centre for contacts, collective researches, mutual information ; all based on one strong conviction : the pastoral character of the liturgy.

It can be understood that all that is essential in the French liturgical revival became gradually crystallized around this common effort, especially as the C. P. L., to be truly of the Church, has always tried to unite all degrees and tendencies : its directing committee includes Dominicans, Benedictines, Jesuits, Oratorians, etc., as well as the secular clergy, and laymen.

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The C. P. L.'s methods can be readily deduced from the foregoing considerations. The centre is the place of meeting together during study sessions (at least once a year, at Vanves) of theologians, historians of the liturgy and the Church, Biblical scholars, patrologists, canonists, on the one hand, and on the other, parish priests, chaplains and missionaries from the most varied milieux ; the discussion delves deeply into the tradition of the Church — for the liturgy is a basis — to solve practical pastoral problems in all their variety. Various working committees complete these regular meetings, and include philologists, sociologists, etc., according to need.

In this way there has been a gradual unveiling of the wealth (this was sometimes a real discovery) and the pastoral interest of the great realities of the liturgy : the Mass (meetings of 1946 and 1950), baptism (1945 and

1952), solemn communion (1951), a Christian death (1949), the liturgy for the sick (1948), the economy of salvation (1950), the Last Judgment (presented at the Lyons Congress in 1947). Finally, the preparation of a new Congress, which was to have met at Chartres in 1953, but which had to be postponed owing to difficulties of accommodation, gave an occasion for studying the liturgy in relation to the whole pastorate of the Church, especially its mission of evangelization (which was dealt with at Versailles in 1954).

The results of this work chiefly concern priests. The annual meeting at Versailles is for them (in 1954 there were about 800 present), and so are the numerous diocesan meetings (twelve in the year) which are the occasion for common discussion on pastoral problems under the direction of the bishop, who remains chiefly responsible for the liturgical life in his diocese (it is often owing to these meetings that recent diocesan directions concerning the Mass have been published). A series of publications completes this work: the collections "Études liturgiques" scientific in treatment; "Lex orandi" which, together with volumes giving the essence of the work done at Vanves, has published works which have become well known, such as *Le Mystère pascal* by Fr. Bouyer; "L'Esprit liturgique," more popular in style; two of its publications can be regarded as indispensable as a foundation for the liturgical pastorate: *La Messe* and *Les Sacrements*, by Fr. Roguet. The review *La Maison-Dieu* contributes each quarter nearly two hundred pages, mostly devoted to a particular theme which has been the subject of lengthy research.

This is mainly a theoretical formation, but it is necessary for the realization of a liturgical revival which does not only consist in the modification of some accidental details or acclamation of the latest novelty. Equally indispensable are suitable instruments for the pastorate.

In September of each year the C. P. L. provides a bibliographical catalogue with comments, both theoretical and practical which serves as useful documentation. Its publication and the classification of the works listed is undertaken by the librairie St.-Dominique, 222 Faubourg St. Honoré, Paris VIII. The *Notes de Pastorale liturgique*, formerly simply a bulletin sent to members, has developed into a little quarterly review, very practical in scope, while aiming at a not too great simplicity. Finally, the C. P. L. publishes a series of pamphlets giving priests the necessary information for services (extra-liturgical prayer-meetings): *Montons à Jérusalem* for Lent, which was very successful; *Le Seigneur vient*, for Christmas, etc. In this series *Invitatoires* has been announced as forthcoming, intended for those who are to comment on the Mass.

With a view to the liturgical education of the faithful, a certain number of pedagogic methods are now ready to hand: besides the collection "L'Esprit liturgique," we may mention the *albums liturgiques* of *Fêtes et Saisons*, with a large circulation; the *Images de la Vie chrétienne*, for a less educated public; film strips by the *Éditions du Berger*; talking films in the *Missions par le Cinéma*.

The missal forms a very important element in this education of the faith-



ful. The three large missals published in France (Hautecombe, Feder, Biblique) have been brought out with the active collaboration of the C. P. L. and are sponsored by it. A special committee has effected a translation of the Ordinary of the Mass, with all possible technical correctness (we may refer the reader to the volume published in "Études liturgiques" which gives the result), in collaboration with the publishers of these missals and Dom Lefebvre's Belgian missal. We may also mention that at the request of the hierarchy a team of different specialists is preparing a translation of the Sunday lectionary.

In the matter of singing — a fundamental section of the liturgical offices, the work of the monks of Solesmes and the Gregorian Institute have produced great fruits (especially in the development of the Ward method); on the other hand, the reviews of sacred music have striven to define the roles of church choirs and scholae under present conditions (cf. for instance the recent meeting at Versailles, 13-15 April, 1955). The C. P. L. had no reason to interfere in a work which specialists carry out with great competence. At the most, it could suggest meetings for discussion of the diverse points of view in the light of the liturgical pastorate; for the last two years, such meetings have taken place in the form of twice yearly study days, and are a proof of mutual comprehension, if not of harmony and unity of view, difficult to obtain.

The problem was more serious with regard to singing in French. The time after the war has seen, in the most alive parishes, a rejection which has often been too drastic, of the ancient repertoire and the flowering of novelties of very unequal value. The first effort on the part of the C. P. L. has been to allow the faithful to sing the *psalms* in their own language. The psalms are a fundamental element of the Church's prayer and to find a translation which was both faithful to the Hebrew text and also susceptible of being sung to adapted melodies, to find those melodies themselves, much labour was required from various experts. The result was achieved, thanks to the skill of the authors of the *Bible de Jérusalem* and Fr. Gélineau, S. J. These translations (the complete psalter will be published shortly) are too well known to be described here, except for emphasizing what an incomparable instrument it is for pastoral work (if the abuses are avoided which Fr. Gélineau himself denounced recently in *L'Union et Évangéliser*, Nov., 1954).

The psalms are not meant to replace hymns. There were already a number of new hymns in existence, perhaps too many. It was necessary to collect them, sort them out, and provide them with an easy means of diffusion. The principal publishers met together, at the instigation of the C. P. L., their guide in pastoral matters, in order to study together the problems arising. One of the first results of this meeting has been the edition on standard cards, allowing of a large circulation and continual progress. The publication of the texts in book form is being considered. Besides its role of counsellor, the C. P. L. is helping in the selection of this repertory by publishing regularly, as a supplement to the *Notes de Pastorale liturgique*, a list of new hymns with commentary.

To permit of better interpretation, records have been made by the Studio S. M. : 3 long playing records of the psalms, one of the hymns (others are in preparation).

Is it possible to draw some general conclusions from all this revival ? Perhaps the most important characteristic is that of quality. It would seem that, little by little, liturgical offices regain their value ; this applies chiefly to the Mass, which is increasingly faithful to Tradition, and at the same time is becoming a great asset in pastoral work. The evolution in the style of " dialogue Masses " might be one striking example, the rediscovery of the High Mass as the peak of parochial life, another. Many of the new directions would have been absolutely unthinkable ten years ago, because either one did not see clearly enough or the ground had not been prepared. On the other hand, a similar evolution can be observed in the prayer meetings not codified by the Church. From certain " paraliturgies " with which we were formerly familiar, to the " celebration of the Word " as suggested in " Montons à Jérusalem, " is all the distance between a human elaboration in which the desire for adaptation often bordered on fantasy, sometimes on bad taste, and a reinspiration from the liturgical " style " of the Church.

Does this mean that everything has been done ? Far from it. Many parochial ceremonies are still either so much in a rut that the faithful are alienated from the liturgy, or else so novel that a new cult is formed separated from the letter, and often from the spirit, of the Church's worship. If the revival is to be authentic, its progress must necessarily be slow. But on all sides this striving for quality is making itself felt.

We are far from the time when missionary circles were reticent, if not resolutely opposed to the traditional liturgy. The movements of Catholic Action, whose standpoint normally keeps them away from our efforts, are discovering the importance of the Church's rites and of the revival which has been accomplished. The bond now firmly established between A. C. I., A. C. O. and M. F. R., to mention only the adult movements, which are the most exigent, and the C. P. L. is a sign of this which is most reassuring.

The same orientation is manifest in religious instruction. Three large organizations for the coordination of the Institutes devoted to independent education have inscribed the study of the liturgical problem in their syllabus for 1954-55 : the Centre for pedagogical studies (of the Society of Jesus), in collaboration with the representatives of numerous other congregations (the meeting at Amiens, August 1954 ; cf. *La Maison-Dieu*, no. 42) ; the Union de Religieuses Enseignantes and that of the Frères Enseignants (congress of July 1955). In addition, the prime movers of the catechetical movement, the importance of which is paramount in the Church in France at the present time, are fully entering into the question of the liturgical revival and are making it a basic element of their work.

This convergence of views is one of the best proofs of the serious work accomplished and one of the greatest motives for hope for the Church in France at this time. The pastorate is beginning to find its unity in the midst of the diversity of its sections, and the liturgy is taking the place awarded to it by the most ancient Tradition and required by the structure of the Christ-

ian mystery. The remarkable effort made by the young *Centre pastoral des missions à l'intérieur* will perhaps help gradually in setting these elements together.

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The organization and coordination of this revival has permitted a fairly coherent exposition. It must not however be thought that the French liturgical movement is confined to that. Numerous researches are proceeding on the parochial level, with more or less success; the names of some parishes which are especially active have spread beyond the French frontiers: Saint-Severin, Colombes, L'Hay-les-Roses, but a number of others, less well known, are doing excellent pioneer work.

In addition, personalities like Fr. Bouyer, Fr. Doncœur, etc., collaborating actively with the C. P. L., are pursuing their researches and have a great personal influence in the matter.

Finally we must stress on the value of research in other fields (although this could be the subject of an extensive article) such as the present-day study of the Church's theology, the patristic publications (collection *Sources chrétiennes*), and especially the biblical revival, to which the liturgical revival is linked in a way which is seen to become more essential every day.

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It remains to tell the part played by the French episcopate in the movement. Perhaps we should have begun there to emphasize its importance; for what could pastoral revival amount to if it were not encouraged, controlled, animated, by the hierarchy? The creation in 1951 of an episcopal committee for the pastorate and the liturgy was a noteworthy aspect of the revival in question. It is this committee which in future holds the responsibility and the control of all initiatives. After the *Directoire pour la pastorale des sacrements*, promulgated by the episcopate shortly before the appointment of this committee, it is preparing a *Directoire pour la pastorale de la Messe*, which marks a new stage. It calls upon the C. P. L. for some of its work. The latter has been a private organization from the outset, and desires to remain so. But the role played by some bishops in its foundation, the actual presence of bishops on its directing committee and at its study meetings, is not without significance: it is a proof of the effective participation of those who have the responsibility of the pastoral life of the Church in the researches made to improve this pastoral life.

Shall we bring this chronicle to a conclusion? It has no conclusion, for it continues, together with the movement it describes, which must go on for many years. The optimism of these reflections must not hide the reality: the problems are still numerous, many are the difficulties. But the recent Roman decisions to which we alluded and those which, we are told, are being prepared, the active fidelity with which a large part of the French clergy set themselves to carry them out, give us yet another proof that the Holy Ghost inspires the Church, and, in consequence, renew our confidence.

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*Great Britain.*

The Liturgical Movement in Great Britain has never been organized as it is in most continental countries where there are centres of study and of pastoral initiative. Not since the death of men like Edmund Bishop, Dr. Fortescue, Father Thurston, S. J. and Dom Hugh Connolly have there been English scholars of the calibre of those of France, Germany and Belgium. One of the reasons for this is that the natural subjects for such work, the Benedictines, are for the most part taken up with running their large and very successful schools. Another reason for this weakness in liturgical scholarship is the lack of a Catholic institute of higher studies which normally would stimulate research. All this, apart from the fact that the Church in England is still largely a missionary, Church and the practical cares of pastoral work outweigh all else.

To look at affairs in the practical order, there is not as yet any national or diocesan commission for liturgy and most of the efforts towards liturgical activity are unofficial in the sense that they are not initiated by ecclesiastical authority though they are looked on with approval.

The principal organization that concerns itself with liturgical action is the *Society of St Gregory*. Founded in 1929, it enjoys the patronage of the entire hierarchy though it remains responsible for its own actions. Up to about 1942 it was almost exclusively concerned with promoting the singing of plainsong. At that time this was necessary emphasis and much good work was done. If large numbers of the laity are now familiar with plainsong, at least in so far as they know that it is the music of the church and that it is widely and well sung in innumerable parish churches and communities, it is almost entirely due to the steady work of the Society in summer schools and other regional meetings.

In the early years of the war there came a change of emphasis. The programme of the schools began to include lectures on the whole field of liturgy, and this seems to have led to a widening of membership, attracting many who have no special interest in music. Since then attendance at summer schools has steadily risen and membership of the Society, though it seems to be stationary at the moment, has gone up too. The Summer Schools which have been held in a great number of centres in England and Scotland, ranging from London to Glasgow, and from *milieux* so different as the famous Benedictine School at Ampleforth in Yorkshire, to the popular seaside resort of Blackpool in Lancashire, still continue to be held. In the last three years or so a considerable number of distinguished speakers, including three or four bishops, have spoken on a wide range of subjects. The *Motu proprio* of St Pius X was commemorated with particular *éclat* at the Southampton Summer School in 1953, when his work for the liturgy was examined from every point of view. This proved to be one of the best attended and most popular schools of recent years. The year before that the School at Birkdale in Lancashire studied the whole question of the Liturgy and the



Spiritual Life, and last year at Blackpool the emphasis was distinctly pastoral, the subjects ranging from the parish considered as a cell of the Mystical Body to such practical questions as Family First Communions and the Problem of Evening Services.

One of the difficulties felt at these schools is that much of the material and of the subsequent discussion is really the concern principally of the pastoral clergy, who do not attend the schools in any great number. For these, and other more fundamental reasons, a branch of the Society was formed some years ago exclusively for the clergy. It was called the Priest's Association. But after two or three meetings which were successful enough in themselves, further meetings could not be held for lack of support. One reason was most probably that the Society of St Gregory had become associated in the mind of clergy and laity alike with its earlier plainsong activity, and the clergy were not very interested in going to summer schools or other gatherings for that. There were undoubtedly other reasons and a small localized meeting of the Priest's Association was held recently but no report is yet to hand. Other purely private meetings of clergy have been held and seem to have been successful. The secret seems to be short meetings with clearly defined objectives and a practical bent.

One centre that acts as a stimulus for both clergy and laity is Spode House (Staffordshire) which is run by the Dominicans. Study weeks and week-ends are held there all the year round and last year an important one was held on the subject of Religion and Music. The liturgical aspect had a prominent place and one of the results is that at this year's meeting to be held in Easter Week, a rhythmical translation of the psalms of Vespers by Sebastian Bullough, O. P., will be sung to a setting by a brilliant young Catholic composer, Anthony Milner.

In fact, it is one of the paradoxes of our situation that we have a great number of talented Catholic musicians, some very distinguished indeed, and yet the standard of singing in our ordinary parish churches leaves almost everything to be desired. In recent weeks a controversy about hymns stimulated by the letter of a distinguished Catholic painter, ran for several weeks in the *Catholic Herald* but apart from a general feeling of dissatisfaction, nothing very constructive emerged.

Another manifestation of the apparently incurably English bent to look at the liturgy from a musical standpoint was a very successful short school recently organized by the *Catholic Musicians Guild* on the music of Holy Week. It was held in London in the evening hours of two days and was attended by some sixty people.

There are two other liturgical societies. The first, *The Magnificat Society*, was founded in 1927 to provide a simple means for the laity to take some part in the Divine Office. Members undertake to say at least one Canonical Hour in Latin per day. This Hour can be changed from week to week. Assistance is given from a central office in all that concerns the saying of the Office, and correspondence courses in Church Latin were organized. Membership was at one time about 300. The society published for many years

a small review called *Magnificat*, which dealt particularly with the Divine Office, and it is only in recent years that rising costs of printing have driven it out of circulation. The society held study week-ends from time to time but none have been held recently.

A third society is the *Vernacular Society of Great Britain* which occupies itself with the question of an extension of the vernacular in the liturgy. It arose out of a memorable discussion, again in the pages of the *Catholic Herald*, in the early years of the war. It has had various ups and downs but now has a chaplain appointed by the Cardinal-Archbishop of Westminster and publishes a well written and lively *Newsletter*. The society has always made the first point of its programme an extension of the vernacular in the Ritual and its members, as well as a great number of others, were very disappointed when in an interview given to the *Catholic Herald* last autumn, the Archbishop of Birmingham made it known that the hierarchy were not petitioning the Holy See for the use of English in the administration of the sacraments. It is difficult to make exact statements on the matter but there is probably a fairly heavy weight of conservatism in the country which, combined with a certain fear of the effect on non-Catholics, makes a great number of the more traditional Catholics fear any change in the present order of things. The publication of the new American Ritual has not made any change in the atmosphere yet, but it may do so in time.

In this context it may be said that there would seem to be an opinion current that the Divine Office is a legitimate area for experiment. A new edition of the *Manual of Prayer* which is the only official collection of vernacular prayers in the country, contains an English translation of Compline. No music however is provided or suggested. In the last few weeks an interesting edition of Compline in English, called *Sunday Compline*, has been published. It has been compiled by the well-known liturgical apostle, Father Clifford Howell S. J. A colleague, Father Manning S. J., has collaborated with him in a very successful translation of the psalms, and the whole has been set to the music of the chant (plainsong). If it has not done anything else it has shown that a version of the psalms that can be sung, is a possibility. Neither the old Douai version which is full of obscurities, nor the version done by Mgr R. Knox from the new Latin Psalter, is at all suitable for singing.

The principal and indeed the only review devoted exclusively to liturgy is the organ of the Society of St Gregory and is called *Liturgy*. This is not a specialist magazine but is intended for the laity and endeavours, while aiming at a high standard, to emphasize the pastoral side of liturgy. But it suffers from the same disadvantage that afflicts the whole society, that of a mixed clientèle, clerical and lay (not to mention the diverging interests of liturgy as such and music), and it is not always possible to discuss certain pastoral problems as fundamentally as they require. The memorial number in 1953 to commemorate the jubilee of the *Motu proprio* was a considerable volume both in quantity and quality. It did not however sell noticeably better than its ordinary issues. Circulation is about 1,200 but it must reach

a public far larger than that. It is distributed widely over the English-speaking Catholic world.

One of the weaknesses of the English Liturgical Movement is its ignorance of what is going on on the continent and it has been one of the aims of *Liturgy* to supply for that defect so far as its limited sources allow. Recently the principal Catholic weekly, the *Tablet*, carried a series of articles on Liturgical Reform by the well-known scholar, Lancelot Sheppard. In masterly fashion he sets out the main lines of the Liturgical Movement since Guéranger and made a wide and important public aware of what is the present current of liturgical effort. Significantly it aroused no correspondence. The information contained in the *Catholic Herald* is the most reliable and one can count on it to give any important news. But as the whole context and atmosphere of the European movement is not understood here a good deal of that news has not the force it might have. Indeed it can be said that the more publicised and less important aspects of liturgical experiments in France, for instance, which have been published piece-meal in English papers, has done more harm than good. As a recent discussion in both the *Catholic Herald* and the *Universe* about such matters as Mass facing the people and the state of church art showed, there is a large-scale failure to understand the central issues. Mass facing the people is *selon eux* just another stunt.

Yet an understanding of the aims of the Liturgical Movement does grow, and possibly the laity are ahead of the clergy. One finds a widespread desire for some form of active participation, and this is gradually being met. A dialogue evening Mass is celebrated every First Friday in Westminster Cathedral. More and more bishops are giving general permissions for dialogue Masses, the most recent being that of the Archbishop of Birmingham, continuing his excellent work at Plymouth. In a letter to his clergy he strongly recommended the practice of active participation both at sung and low Masses. A similar lead of his when he was Bishop of Plymouth, had a considerable success. The Society of St. Gregory has a booklet in active preparation to assist people to take part in the simplest form of dialogue Mass, and it provides the easiest plainsong Mass (VIII) so that the book can be used for sung Mass as well. It should be out shortly after Easter.

Apart from these indications it would be difficult to give any estimate of the number of parishes where some measure of active participation had been achieved. What perhaps is the greatest desiderandum is a sense of community. English Catholicism is almost entirely an urban thing where the sense of community is weakest, and this partly accounts for that lack. But even here, ideas are circulating and are being welcomed by the laity. As the present writer said in a former issue of *Lumen Vitae*, the general picture presented by an average congregation on a Sunday morning in England is little different from what it was fifty years ago. Although the situation is changing slowly, that is still probably very near the truth.

In the realm of radio there has been the important development of Television. When this became a practical possibility, it was thought that the Church would immediately step into the front rank of religious broadcasting. Events have not justified that optimistic view. There have been four major

telecasts of liturgical services, two of High Mass from France, a Pontifical High Mass from Leeds, and Compline and Benediction from Westminster Cathedral. The two Masses from France seem to have met with a very large measure of acceptance, the two English broadcasts were less successful. The Pontifical Mass from Leeds met with a quite considerable opposition from the old-fashioned Protestant wing, but something more important and disturbing was revealed. The English may love pageantry on a national occasion like a coronation, but they seem to have no appreciation of a liturgical service which is largely incomprehensible both by reason of its elaborate ceremonial and the 'foreignness' of its language. Mere ritual, however splendid, will not win the people. That would seem to be the pastoral lesson to be learned from these broadcasts and a great deal of re-thinking of our approach will have to be done.

The rate of publication of books on the liturgy is slow and the native Catholic contribution is small. The most considerable book of recent years was the Anglican monk's (Dom Gregory Dix), *The Shape of the Liturgy*, which aroused a lively interest in both Catholic and non-Catholic circles. A Catholic pendant to this, though not its equal in scholarship, came from the Farnborough monk, Dom Benedict Steuart. It is called *The Development of Christian Worship*. A slighter book by Dom Illtyd Trethowan of Downside, *Christ in the Liturgy*, is a study in the theology of the liturgy and summarizes much of continental scholarship. Translations of Father Roguet's little books on the Mass and the Sacraments have appeared and Father Chéry's book translated under the title *What is the Mass?* had a very wide sale. But what was something like a best seller was Father Clifford Howell's *The Work of our Redemption*. A small book selling for a few shillings, it is a popular treatment which however conceals a great deal of learning. In the last few weeks another book of his has appeared to prepare people (and clergy) for the celebration of the Easter Vigil. It is called *Preparing For Easter* and consists of sixteen instructions of the sort that can be used by the clergy or read by the laity. It too was published at a low price. A new edition of Dom E. Vandeur's *The Holy Mass* appeared a year or so ago, and a new edition of Dr A. Fortescue's *The Mass*, enriched with a new bibliography, is due to appear this year.

Much has been written on the rubrics in recent years and our chief exponent, Father J. O'Connell, has just brought out an excellent and attractive book called *Church Building and Furnishing* which is more than a study of rubrical law. It is a really liturgical study of what a church is and all that is connected with it. With this may be compared Peter F. Anson's *Churches, their Plan and Furnishing* which though published in America and enhanced with notes by Father Reinhold, is really a native English publication.

In theology both Canon Masure's books on the Mass have been published here in translation, *The Christian Sacrifice* which was something of a best seller, and *The Sacrifice of the Mystical Body*.

Anglicans continue their traditional interest in liturgy and a little book, *The Liturgical Movement*, by the late Canon Crawley gave a very sympathetic



tic and perspicacious account of the Catholic side of the movement. Dr F. L. Cross of Christ Church Oxford, one of the best liturgists of the day, has published a translation of Dr Klauser's provocative little book on the history of the Mass, has edited the Catechetical Discourses of St Cyril of Jerusalem, and has recently brought out a study of St Peter's first epistle, *I Peter, A Paschal Liturgy*. He contributes to the ever-excellent *Journal of Theological Studies*, to which scholars like Dom Botte and Abbot Capelle also contribute learned studies from time to time. A well known Anglo-Catholic clergyman, Hugh Ross Williamson, has just published a study of the Canon of the Roman Mass.

In Scotland there is a revival of liturgical interest in the Presbyterian Church. Dr McArthur's book, *The Evolution of the Christian Year*, was a first-rate historical study of the subject which showed a complete familiarity with the best continental scholarship. *A History of Worship in the Church of Scotland* only just published, by the veteran liturgical scholar Dr W. D. Maxwell, as well as giving an interesting historical account of the development of worship in Scotland from Celtic days to modern times, is a witness to the rising tide of interest in the subject in Scotland.

Although this report is concerned with Great Britain, it is not without importance for us that the first liturgical congress was held in Ireland at Glenstal Priory (O.S.B.) last year. The second is to be hold in the same place this year. Since so many Catholic priests in England are Irish or of Irish origin, this is likely to have some influence on them. The proceedings of the first congress were published in full in the November issue of the lively review of pastoral theology, *The Furrow*, edited by Dr J. G. McGarry of Maynooth College in Ireland.

J. D. CRICHTON,  
*Editor of Liturgy, Harvington*  
*(Great Britain).*

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## II. — NEWS

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### INTERNATIONAL ORGANIZATIONS

#### *International Catholic Child Bureau.*

***A Symposium on the Methods of Infantile Psychotherapy and Catechesis Peculiar to Handicapped Children.*** — On the 16th and 17th April, the Medico-Social and Psycho-Pedagogic Committee of the B. I. C. E. gathered together in Paris twenty specialists from six countries, to discuss the actual tendencies in infantile psychotherapy and to study under what conditions the psychotherapists for children are being selected, what formation they receive and how they practise their art. One afternoon was devoted, in addition, to the problem of the catechesis of abnormal children (physical, psychical or social), in institutions, and a comparison was drawn between the various efforts made in European countries for the training of specialist catechists.

This meeting had been prepared with the greatest care. A questionnaire had been sent to 62 experts (17 countries) : 35 replied and 25 gave an effective response, describing the state of psychotherapy in their 13 respective countries, both from the point of view of general principles and that of the techniques employed and the training of therapists.

On this descriptive base, the working group (comprising pediatricists, psychotherapists, analytic and non-analytic, orthopedagogues, directors and inspectors of special schools) attempted to throw light on the theoretical and practical relations between the sectors, too often separated, of orthopedagogy (the means of which remain psycho-pedagogic and aim at the realization of human values) and psychotherapy (the techniques of which bear on the psychic life and attempt to restore the *possibility* of perceiving the appeal of values presented by the psycho-pedagogic milieu). The variety in the actual working methods and yet the unity of general aims — for instance, the need for team work, where different specialists complement each other and utilize the action of an educative milieu — were brought to light and led to certain resolutions and suggestions the Christian inspiration of which only stresses their urgency :

1) psychotherapy and orthopedagogy should be performed by a qualified staff, trained in institutions recognized, both for their general psycho-pedagogy and therapeutic specialization.

2) The specializations can be acquired by various methods, which should be distinguished from scientific theories and separated from normative theories (subjacent philosophies). The psychoanalytic method, in certain forms and for certain cases, may be indicated. But those who employ it should be aware of the context in which this technique lies, respect the child's personality and help him to assume gradually the problem of his family relationships.

3) On their part, the orthopedagogues will not content themselves with seeking for adaptation through and with the milieu, but will aim at restoring the adaptation of the child to himself and his family surroundings avoiding any prolonged stay in hospital which is not absolutely necessary.

4) When, lacking a Catholic psychotherapist of recognized competence, it is thought necessary to have recourse to a non-Catholic, great care must be taken with regard to his personality, his authentically scientific spirit, his attitude to the child's dignity and his own sense of values.

5) In any case, a centre of psychotherapy for children will not consider its task as finished with the reestablishment of the psychic equilibrium of the child, but will encourage his development with regard to moral and religious values, at least by helping — as far as is compatible with professional secrecy — the teachers who are responsible for this.

The enquiry and the attached documents reveal a serious lack of sound programmes and qualified institutes to deal with the formation of psychotherapists for children (not doctors). Outside the psychoanalytical institutes, properly so-called, the B. I. C. E. only received the very interesting programme of the Institute of Infantile Psychology (6 Pembridge Villas, London, W. 11) — with three years of controlled work following a university degree —. The lack at the Universities is very marked in this connection : it is for private initiative to fill it.

The colloquy on *specialized catechesis* for handicapped children was one of the most stimulating of these days. Only Austria, represented by the Rev. Albert OTTENY (inspector of special schools), offered a consoling picture. Not only had Vienna its Institute for training catechists, lay and religious, but there exists a specialized course — with a term of practical seminars — for catechists directed to abnormal children (14,000 in Austria, not including orphans and delinquents). It is clear that the very existence of this specialization causes researches on the conditions of access to the message of salvation, proper to handicapped children, and permits, perhaps for the first time, a real grasp of the problem. Already, a course in specialized catechesis in this sense figures in the programme of the Ecole de Pédagogie et d'Orientalisation, at Québec, and there exists in Paris a catechetical committee (of which the Abbé Bissonnier, Melle Rampoldi and Melle Dargnies are particularly active promoters) which concentrates on this special catechesis and obtained in the last national congress of religious instruction (a report of which appears elsewhere in this issue) a discussion of this problem in the meetings open to groups of specialized work.

We must congratulate the organizers of these days (especially the Abbé BISSENNIER, Dr. BUSNELLI, who composed and dealt with the questionnaire, and Professor MONTALTA, who directed the meetings) on the resolutely apostolic and scientific spirit, open to all the techniques which favour the child's development, which animated the preparation and realization of this meeting. For my part, I have never understood better the divergence in psychological and pedagogical perspectives (in secular education as well as catechesis) and the necessity for their union and collaboration as distinct functions at the service of the child of and, his human and religious future.

A. GODIN, S. J., *Brussels*.

### *International J. O. C. and Its Activities.*

In 1927, two years after the official foundation of the Belgian J. O. C., the movement overflowed the frontiers and spread into France. In the course of the ten following years, it reached Canada, Portugal, Switzerland, Yugoslavia, Hungary, Colombia and the Belgian Congo. In 1937, the industrial North of England saw the birth of the first Jocist cell in that country. During the war, the movement spread to Australia, the United States, Scotland, the Argentine and Costa Rica. In 1945 a new stage began: Germany, Austria, Holland, Chili, Brazil, Cuba welcomed the message from Belgium. Finally, during the last few years, its international development has been more strongly marked in the countries which are known as 'Mission.'

In short, the J. O. C. has penetrated into some 60 countries and counts about 1,300,000 affiliated and militant members, around which are grouped more than double the number of 'sympathizers.'

The J. O. C. has succeeded in this way because it responded to a need long awaited. It is obvious that its international expansion is chiefly explained by the fact that the problems it sets out to solve are universal in the world.

It would be tedious to give details of the activities undertaken by the different national J. O. C. The testimonies which we quote below will be enough to show the kind of work done and the way in which the J. O. C. enters into the heart of social situations, like the leaven in the dough, to contribute to their transformation.

In the countries in which the J. O. C. is strongly developed, as in Belgium, France, England, etc., its organization is established on the national level, or at least the federal, and the coordinated action of the cells sometimes has a considerable influence on the social plane. When the movement is still in its infancy, as in Angola, Scotland, Venezuela, the organization only exists in the local stage. The effort is a more humble one, but, in the spirit of the movement, it aims at a concrete efficiency by its insertion into the heart of social difficulties and problems. Finally, in certain territories, the J. O. C. only has correspondents who are trying to found the movement; this is the stage of prospecting and the study of possibilities. This is the case in Korea, Denmark, Egypt, Madagascar, Malaya, Pakistan, Northern Rhodesia, Ruanda Urundi, Salvador, Sweden, etc.



Except for its own members, whom it tries to make into authentic Christian apostles and imitators of Christ, the J. O. C. does not attempt a directly ecclesiastical aim. It works at the development of the Kingdom of God on earth, in a propaedeutic way; it prepares the way for the Lord, makes His paths straight. By the purification, even purely human, of the environment in which the young workers labour, it tries to cast a bridge between the Church and proletarian masses immersed in the surrounding materialism. The J. O. C. wants to be an instrument of invasion, bringing grace into non-Christian or even hostile regions. It therefore serves as a point of insertion for the social undertakings of the Church and proves that the latter is not disinterested in practical situations. Its final aim, clearly stated, is no doubt to proclaim to all young workers the invitation to enter the Kingdom of God — for, in the final analysis, that is all that matters — but the direct object is to make the earth a footstool for their feet. Here are some examples. In India, where there are fifty sections, the Jocists try to put at the disposition of the poor, social and cultural services; thus at Calcutta there are institutions for housing, savings, cooperative movements, help for young Catholics in the Hindu quarter; the J. O. C. fights immorality in the transports. In Ceylon, it has installed a permanent social centre and public services in the completely communist quarter of the port; it radiates in this environment by means of its paper in Cingalese, which has an issue of 10,000 copies.

The women are recruited among the young workers in the Posts and Telegraphs; they are concerned with the national phenomenon of 'loans to girls' which, by means of the usurers, leads so many Cingalese girls to prostitution. The Jocist action reaches a great many young Buddhists, Hindus, Moslems and Anglicans who discover christianity through the J. O. C. In Japan, it has only existed for six years, but its 83 sections are true groups of catechumenate among the working classes. "Japan being hardly christianized, it is impossible to do much good with Catholics only, which is why pagans who admit the social principles of the Church are admitted to J. O. C. Besides, they soon become Catholic. The J. O. C. is therefore here an apostolic movement of first class value... The pagans come, not (as a rule, at any rate) attracted by religion, but by the social question. The role of the militants who are all Catholics, will be to influence them in order to bring them to baptism..." The action of the local sections is directed to applying practical solutions to the problems of the working classes. At Tobata, for instance, to grapple with the housing problem, the Jocists had decided to get together the necessary materials for the construction of a house for a poor family. In the event, they were able to build three houses, of three rooms each, which are now occupied by destitute families. Besides this immediate result, their action had the effect of attracting the attention of the inhabitants to the critical situation of some families obliged to live in inhuman conditions."<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> R. P. MURGUE, *Le monde missionnaire en 1953*, in the review *Église Vivante*, VI (1954), no. 1.

In those places where, as in Austria, there is an acute problem of refugees and émigrés, the J. O. C. works to obtain relief. When racial antagonism threatens to cause disasters, the J. O. C. attempts to effect union. Thus in the Union of South Africa, an heroic work has been in existence for five years, organized by a handful of young pioneer workers, Europeans, Afrikaanders, blacks and Indians. A dozen sections have been founded and have required, not only a thousand recommendings, but a daily warfare on the part of the militants, in spite of constant threats provoked by the racial situation in the country. In the Belgian Congo, a special effort is made to arrive at a permanent collaboration between former white Jocists and the black militants in the Congolese sections. In Latin America, where illiteracy and social injustice are permanent sores, the J. O. C. collaborates in a Christian spirit with the undertakings of Unesco. In Chili, its activity is in the direction of *basic education*; it connotes a campaign of primary instruction and general culture, the creation of a centre for professional advice, the selection and training of monitresses specializing in basic education, a club for young workers from the country employed in the towns, and a permanent exhibition for the setting up and cheap decoration of working class houses.

Such examples could be multiplied; they would only go to show how the J. O. C. knows the way to adapt itself to particular situations and attack real problems. The words which Pius XII addressed to the heads of the J. O. C. on the occasion of its 25th anniversary are true: It is not by opposing a negative and purely defensive attitude to the wicked shepherds that one can hope to solve these problems. It is by active presence, in the heart of the workshops and factories, of pioneers who are fully conscious of their double vocation as christians and workers, intending to shoulder their responsibilities and to know neither truce nor rest until they have transformed their surroundings in accordance with the teaching of the Gospel. It is by this positive and constructive work that the Church will be able to extend its vivifying action to the millions of souls which it enfolds in its ardent and maternal solicitude; and it is to this sublime task that the young leaders of the Christian workers trained by the J. O. C. are called upon to contribute. The International J. O. C. longs to realize this work so dear to the Church.

Marguerite FIÉVEZ, *Brussels*.  
*Secretary to the International J. O. C.*

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## AFRICA

### *The Belgian Congo.*

**The Catholic Press.** — Catholic missionaries in the Belgian Congo very soon erected printing presses whence issued the first catechisms, prayer books and school books. Soon after, small periodicals in the vernacular were

started in order to strengthen the zeal of the first Christians who could read and write. This embryo missionary press was the forerunner of very numerous Catholic weeklies, reviews and periodicals appearing in the Congo today. The modern appearance of this press is partly explained by its beginnings.

Most of the 38 vicariates and apostolic prefectures in the Belgian Congo possess their printing press. There are also numerous periodicals, nearly all monthly, in the vernacular. The principal ones are published in one of the four Congolese languages which are officially recognized — among the very numerous dialects in the country — as cultured languages : Kikongo, Tshiluba, Singala and Kiswahili. Some of these periodicals already have a large circulation, if we take into account the general level of education, and the fact that the use of the vernacular necessarily restrains the area of diffusion of a publication. For instance, the *Kinyamateka* of Kabgayi has a circulation of 22,000, the *Hodi* of Usumbara, 17,000, the *Nkuruse* of Luluabourg, 11,000. Amongst these periodicals, the *Kongo ya Sika*, a bi-monthly published in Leopoldville and the *Hodi*, a weekly published in Ruanda, are like real newspapers and gain each year in appearance and in the quality of their information.

Beside this vernacular press, we must also mention the missionary periodicals in French, less popular but extending throughout the Congo. The principal is the *Croix du Congo*, a Leopoldville weekly. The others are more in the nature of specialized periodicals : the *Signum Fidei*, the monthly review of the former pupils of the Brothers of the Christian Schools, with its spiritual supplement, *Compagnon de Route*, the *Aurore* (Bukavu), a monthly of the " Digest " order, the *Ami* (kabgayi), a monthly of general information, *Route de Lumière*, of spiritual interest, published by the " Bibliothèque de l'Étoile, " *Syndicalisme Congolais*, the organ of the Christian trades unions. There is also the *Revue du Clergé Africain*, whose influence in the Belgian Congo and in French Africa is considerable.

In January 1955, the White Fathers are starting a new weekly in French, *Temps Nouveaux*, destined chiefly for the eastern part of the Congo. In fact, the distances, slowness of communication by ship and rail, divide the Congo into two zones, the east and west, the degree of culture and mentality being sufficiently different to authorize the creation of two Catholic papers.

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We have only up to now mentioned the publications intended for the natives. It is characteristic of the Belgian Congo, perhaps unfortunately, that there are still in existence two series of publications, one mainly for Europeans and the other for the natives.

The chief daily paper published in Leopoldville for the whites, the *Courrier d'Afrique*, is decidedly Catholic in tone. The *Essor du Congo*, Elisabethville, shows more liberal tendencies, but can be definitely placed among the papers in favour of Christian ideas. Also in the list of Catholic papers are the Dutch weekly *De Week* and the biblical monthly *Aequatoria* (Coquilhatville). The monthly *Echo Scout* is intended for both European and native scouts.

This double press is not to be found in the neighbouring French territories nor in the English colonies of West Africa. Catholic weeklies like *La*

*Semaine de l'A. E. F.* (Brazzaville), *Afrique Nouvelle* (Dakar), the *Herald* (Lagos), are intended for both Europeans and Africans.

Should we see a form of discrimination in this situation of the Congolese press? Certainly not, and no one in the Congo would complain about it. On the one hand, the European community wanted real daily newspapers well informed and documented (which are lacking in the neighbouring foreign territories), and on the other the missions desired to have really popular papers in the vernacular, the languages spoken by the readers themselves.

It must however be recognized that this situation must be looked upon as temporary. Indications of a change are already visible. An increasing number of Congolese read the European dailies, if we like to call them so; they will soon, no doubt, join in producing them. The *Temps Nouveaux*, which we have already mentioned, will attempt to be a weekly suitable both for Europeans and Africans.

There is another side to the Catholic native press. We have only so far mentioned missionary periodicals under the management of, and to a certain extent still entirely written by European missionaries only. But there, too, an evolution both rapid and fortunate is taking place. The part taken by the Congolese themselves, both ecclesiastics and laymen, in the press, is increasing. Some of the items are now entrusted to them; native priests are running and producing monthlies like the *Lutondo Lweto* and *Ntetembo Eto*. Lately, the *Croix du Congo* has acquired a native chief editor, Mr. José Lubeya.

Quite recently, papers entirely run by Congolese laymen have been started in Leopoldville; such are *Conscience Africaine*, and in kikongo, *Kongo dia Ngunga*, Catholic in tone.

It is opportune that the Congolese should take this initiative, for we are at the beginning of an epoch in the Congo in which new dangers are awaiting Catholicism: the introduction of laicised Government schools, up to now unknown, the often delicate problem of the relations between white and black, new social and moral conditions of life in the large towns, requiring the creation appropriate of Catholic Action movements, etc. The Congolese, sincere Christians with a consciousness of their responsibilities, have to guide their brethren and lead them to Christian solutions.

We have not mentioned the *Bibliothèque de l'Étoile*, the missionary publishing house whose activities are widespread in the Congo. We refer our readers to our former notes concerning it in *Lumen Vitae*, IX (1954), pp. 592-594.

There is therefore a living and popular press in the Congo, both in French and the vernacular. The press possesses the great quality of being at the head of the general evolution of the country. It might perhaps be criticized for a too great dispersal of its forces.

In the Congo, everything is moving rapidly, and the Catholic press must be present to second the work of evangelization and give it new shapes at need. All those who are devoting themselves to the work know how important it is for establishing the Kingdom of God. They hope that they will not fail at the task entrusted to them.

Albert LEYSBETH, S. J., *Leverville*.

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## AMERICA

*Argentine.****The Schools Question and the Origin of the Religious Persecution.***—

Our readers know how, in the course of June 1955, the government's opposition to the Church in the Argentine became open persecution: the prohibition of the traditional religious ceremonies, the enforced exile of ecclesiastical dignitaries, arrest of Catholics, expulsion of religious from their houses and charitable works, until the time when, in Buenos Aires, a revolutionary attempt broke out, after which the President, Peron, seems to have emerged strangely altered... We here give, in a retrospect which lacks neither interest nor instruction, an account of the first anticlerical manifestations by which the government of Buenos Aires, with no respect for consciences nor true democratic liberty, prepared to undermine the influence of the Church and to destroy its educational institutions.

It was after the 10th November 1954 that the relations between the Church and the State became increasingly difficult and the measures taken by the government more and more vexatious. The attitude of the hierarchy was dignified but patient and respectful until the arbitrary decrees against the Catholic schools and religious education in the government schools constrained them to intervene more energetically.

***Closing of schools.*** — The Religious of the Assumption would not take as a pupil a child of parents who were divorced and remarried. An offended mother started a campaign of protest in the government press against this ruling, as though the decision made against her was a measure of reprisal against the recently voted law of divorce. Without any warning, a ministerial decree dated the 1st March 1955, closed all the Institutes and houses belonging to the Congregation.

***Suppression of autonomy.*** — In the Argentine, only the State schools grant official diplomas. In order to obtain them the private schools have to be incorporated into a State school. The few rare exceptions to this law have been suppressed.

The " Training College for Teachers " dependent on the Higher Council for Catholic Education lost its autonomy by a decree of the 2nd March 1955. The students numbered 400, from 85 religious Congregations. This College was worthy of all praise both by the high standard of its teaching and the spirit of union shown by the variety of religious, both men and women, desirous of being trained as capable teachers.

The only primary and secondary schools which still enjoyed autonomy were that of the Holy Redeemer at Buenos Aires and the Immaculate Virgin at Santa Fé. They lost it by the law of the 30-IV-54, completed by the decree of 10-XII-54, without the slightest accusation having been made

against these Jesuit schools. The School of Humanities at La Salta, dependent on the Archbishopric, had been highly praised by the present government for its classic and integral formation. All the same, it lost its official character by the decree of 12-I-55.

**Incorporations delayed.** — In order to bestow valid diplomas, an independent school had to be incorporated or adopted by an official establishment. In the last months of the school year of 1954, the incorporation of 54 schools was held up, so that the pupils from these schools, which were only functioning under a provisory authorization, had to sit their examinations before government boards.

No more foreign religious teachers were allowed to enter and be employed. The temporary residential permits were also suppressed, so that a number of religious were obliged to leave. It can be understood how hard this was for many schools in a country where the shortage of clergy is well known.

The government prepared a schools law which would have placed all the incorporated schools in open inferiority to the official ones. On discovering this danger, the Higher Council of Catholic Education set on foot a campaign which had the effect of stopping the law from being passed, but a flood of insults and violent attacks was set loose against the Church.

**Subsidies suppressed.** — The decree of the 28-XII-54 and the Resolution of 22-XII-54 dismissed 101 religious teachers, and the Resolution of 30-XII-54 transferred the lay staffs of 64 independent establishments to government schools without giving any reason. Eighty primary schools from the poorest districts were affected by these measures; these schools, because of being free, were receiving a subsidy from the government to cover all their expenses.

In the other establishments, most of the expenses were covered by the State, which provided 108 millions of pesos as subsidies to the incorporated schools. A new law has suppressed this grant. In spite of the continual depreciation of money, only 50 millions were granted to those schools which proved necessary to the State.

On the 23rd of March last, a ministerial Resolution made serious charges against the schools, one of which was that of a fiscal fraud of 4 millions of pesos. The *Higher Council for Catholic Education* took up the defence of these schools, but was not allowed to see the recital of the complaints. The Ministry went as far as to declare that it would not enter into polemics with those who had not enough moral courage to admit to the truth!

**Catholic reactions.** — From the beginning of the religious difficulties, on the 10th November 1954, clandestine leaflets replaced the muzzled press and an extraordinary political excitement was shown amongst the educated public. The bishops published several documents full of dignity, Christian patience and pastoral zeal. A propos of the subject with which we are dealing, they wrote a joint letter on the 16th March 1955 to the President of the Nation, containing the following: "In a most surprising manner, without taking into account the most elementary circumstances, by making religious

discriminations, by ignoring the merits recognized by the Ministry itself, and by suppressing the just benefits accorded by the Government, we have arrived at the extremity which is the cause of this present claim for the defence of the rights of the Church, the family and the liberty of education. " After setting out these rights, they added : " In order to appreciate the importance of religious education, it is enough to recall that the Catholic primary and secondary schools amount to a thousand, with more than 300,000 pupils. How much would the support of as many schools under present conditions cost the State ? It is not only unjust but especially odious that parents who, according to their constitutional right, choose an independent school, should have to pay twice as much for the education of their children. " On the same day, the Bishops' Assembly addressed another letter to the Ministry of Education demonstrating the unconstitutionality of the measures taken against religious education in the State schools. These two letters — which the papers were not allowed to publish — let loose a campaign of insults against the Church, and the threat of reforming the Constitution in everything touching the relations between Church and State.

Violent measures, such as forcible entrances into schools, the detention of the clergy, etc., followed, as the newspapers all over the world reported.

In conclusion, we quote some words spoken by President Péron at his inaugural speech at the legislative session (1-IV-55). This annual message is of the highest importance since it forms the official declaration of the Government's schemes and activities. Speaking of youth, he said : Our youth has been neglected ! And if anything has been done it is most often only to destroy the marvellous harmony which nature has achieved in the young ! All, or almost all, the persons and organizations who work at the formation of the soul of our youth, do it in a unilateral manner or, which is still worse, use it as an instrument. " " Our enemies have set themselves against our educational and cultural reforms, first in an isolated, sporadic, hidden, manner, then becoming more and more organized — our enemies, the everlasting reactionaries, the enemies of the country, those against whom we have fought since 1943 ! " "

A. IBÁÑES PADILLA, S. J., *San José*.

### *Cuba.*

**Enquiry Concerning Religious Life.** — The Catholic Action Bureau of Information and Propaganda of the University of Cuba carried out during the past year an enquiry concerning the practice and religious mentality of the country. We will give our readers the results of this enquiry as published in the review *Latinoamérica* <sup>1</sup> of Mexico, supplemented by other information taken from the review *Heches y Dichos* <sup>2</sup> of Saragossa.

<sup>1</sup> November, 1954, pp. 521 et seq.

<sup>2</sup> December 1953, pp. 834-5.

The enquiry took place in a hundred urban and rural centres in the country and included 4,000 interviews bearing on definite questions. Although well organized, it allowed a considerable margin of error to subsist on the subject of religious mentality, owing to the inherent difficulty of obtaining a thoroughly valuable and objective result and of carrying on a religious interview.

With regard to religious practice, the enquiry established the figure of 24 % for *adults* of over 18, for regular Sunday observance, and 42 % for "seasonal," that is to say, those who only turn up on the great feasts. The figure for Easter communions rose to 54 %, of which 11 % received more frequently.

Comparison of these figures with those for France and Belgium would not be without interest ; but to be just, we must take many other factors into account. Sunday practice in France for the whole country is 28% of adults eligible ; in Belgium 44 % of the total eligible population.

The position cannot be exactly compared, for in Cuba the scarcity of priests and the small number of places of worship renders the practice of religion more difficult than in France and Belgium. Indeed, for a population of 5,500,000 inhabitants, the island included in 1953 639 priests, which gives one for 8,600, while Belgium with 15,000 priests has one for 585 inhabitants, and France with 46,000 numbers one for 877. In Cuba, the majority of the priests are in the large towns and the country districts are practically abandoned ; hence their rapid dechristianization and the considerable progress of Protestantism. Calculating in proportion to the extent of the country, Belgium possesses one priest for 2 sq. kms, France one for 12, Cuba one for 156. The scarcity of clergy has the same effect from the point of view of vocations as a continual leak in a pump. The fewer the priests, the fewer the vocations. In 1952, the diocese of Havana only ordained three out of 1,350,000 inhabitants ; there were only 19 major seminarists. The same phenomenon is to be observed in the whole of Latin America.

For the whole territory of Cuba, the number of places of worship is 425, mostly in the large towns. Given the scattered churches and the scarcity of clergy in the interior of the country, it is clear that Sunday religious practice cannot be high. Christian education and training undergo the same disadvantages. Out of a population of 1,475,000 children of school age (5 to 14), generally speaking, it is estimated that 500,000 pupils in the official schools get no religious teaching or hardly any, and that there are 100,000 children in the private schools, mainly Catholic. The rest of the children receive no education at all, either school or parochial.

It is also astonishing, under these conditions that the enquiry produced the figure of 72.5 % of adults who call themselves Catholics and only 6.5 % Protestants, that is, 360,000 adherents to 8 denominations having at their head 431 pastors and 668 temples. Protestantism is chiefly to be found among the undereducated people in the rural zones where a vague spirituality, without any dogmatic grounds, offered a favourable terrain to a facile preaching of the Word of God. It is characteristic to read that, in a Christian population of more than 80 %, only 67 % recognized and stated the divinity of Jesus Christ. As for the higher figure of 90 % of adults who "believe" in the



Blessed Virgin, it really means nothing. Everyone knows that the superstitious devotion to Our Lady (that is to say, without dogmatic convictions) is in direct proportion to the possibilities of the rapid dechristianization of a milieu.

The enquiry reveals the constant increase of indifferentism and loss of faith in the uneducated classes. Out of the 73 % of the adult population who have had only an elementary education or none at all, only 58 % consider themselves Catholics, 24 % unbelievers and 17 % Protestants; the remainder belong to other religions. Among the 7 % of the population who have been to a university, 30 % state that they have nothing to do with the Church.

The findings of this enquiry show the need for increasing the number of priestly vocations, the urgency for the clergy to devote themselves much more to the apostolate among the poorer classes than only among the well to do, the need of developing a solid Christian formation for the people and imparting to them a real knowledge of the Catholic religion; and, finally, the urgent need to intensify the efforts of the Catholic Action movements.

Albert DRÈZE, S. J., *Brussels*.

### *Uruguay.*

#### *An Organization to Prepare Girls for Life : The Nazareth Team. —*

We have in our former notes dealt with two subjects of capital importance: first, *liberty of teaching*,<sup>1</sup> which, although guaranteed both by the letter and the spirit of our constitution, is actually being dangerously restricted by the laicism of the State and its autonomous institutions; then, the *Association of Parents of Catholic Students*,<sup>2</sup> whose influence is great in the Christian education of youth.

We will here give some idea of a less ambitious undertaking: the *Nazareth Team*, composed of members of various groups of Catholic Action for women. The girls who form the teams are capable of thinking seriously about the preparation which is necessary before they can worthily fulfil their mission or vocation in life. Concerned with the superficial and semi-pagan atmosphere of the world of today, they have formed this organization, whose name recalls the ideal and model of every Christian family, in order to help each other and those outside it to prepare themselves for life. We can understand the aim of this organization by reading the account of the *Week of Orientation for Girls beginning Life* which took place in September 1953, at the Sacred Heart College at Montevideo. Ten talks with the object of enlightening the girls on their path in life were given by well known speakers, fully conversant with their subjects. The themes studied during the week were: "What is a vocation? How do we find it out? The need for being

<sup>1</sup> See *Lumen Vitae*, VII (1951), 4, p. 694.

<sup>2</sup> See *Lumen Vitae*, VIII (1953), 3, p. 502.

betrothed. How ought fiancés to live ? What ought a fiancée to be ? Who can start a family ? The enemies of the family. Is it easy to start a family ? The sanctity of marriage. The obligations of a wife. What the wife is with regard to her husband. The mother has to bestow natural life and help in the development of the supernatural life. What the world thinks of nuns and what they really are. What is celibacy ? What the world thinks of bachelors. How to live a single life with joy. ”

A considerable number of girls took part in this study week. The talks were followed with great interest, and certain talks, such as those on *Children* or the *Religious Life* took the fancy of the audience from the first moment. Most of the hearers took notes and many gave their names for a further course of 12 lessons. Afterwards, the Women's Catholic Action, working through the *Nazareth Team*, developed their action in two directions : that of the orientation of the girl beginning life and starting in a profession, and that of the immediate preparation for marriage. More than 500 followed the courses which went more thoroughly into the subjects quoted above. The manifestations of sympathy and approval which reached the organization from all sections of the country emphasize the gravity and worth of the step.

José LLUSSA, S. J., *Montevideo*.

## ASIA

### *Formosa.*

***The Situation of Missionary Catechesis.*** — After more than 200 years of complete interruption (1642-1859), the evangelization of Formosa was begun again by the Dominican Fathers, hardly 100 years ago. In 1948 there were still only 15 missionaries and 10 nuns ; but the expulsions from the Chinese mainland increased this figure to 296 missionaries and 210 nuns. The missionary situation was thus radically transformed, even from the administrative point of view. Instead of an apostolic prefecture, there was an archdiocese and four prefectures. The number of Catholics, in spite of the immigration of Catholics from the continent and the newly converted (more than 6,000 adults from June 1953 to June 1954), hardly goes beyond 32,000, which still does not represent 1.3 % of the population. Except for some districts, to which up to now missionary activity has had to be confined because of political circumstances, Formosa still remains almost entirely a missionary country, although in certain regions the number of experienced missionaries is relatively great. These, however, are meeting with serious obstacles to a direct apostolate owing to the new dialects to be mastered, and cannot devote themselves entirely to it because of the important specialist work which they have to do. The Protestant sects, moreover, are extremely active.

As Formosa is a new mission land, the missionary is, in many places, the only baptized person. Catholics of long standing are rare, and the lack of experienced catechists makes itself felt. The Catholic religion, too, appears as something strange and foreign. To this must be added a very strong popular superstition and ancestor worship, and also a relative prosperity, without counting the nationalist tendencies which, in spite of a generally friendly feeling towards the missionaries, keeps the number of conversions at a very low level amongst the native population.

In order to surmount these difficulties, the missionary has first to adapt himself to the customs of the country and win the people's hearts. For this purpose, kindergartens are being established, and also dispensaries and a whole charitable activity in which the help of the nuns is essential. The confidence of youth in the missionary and mission is aroused by education in all its branches, from private and public schools up to the university. Small libraries in the different stations, occasional conferences (even with lantern slides and films), or other undertakings (including the radio), diffuse the treasures of the revelation preached by the Catholic religion.

In this way we are succeeding, in spite of the lack of trained catechists, in familiarizing small groups, especially of young people, with Christian faith and life, thanks to courses given in the mission stations and to visits to the nuns. Although they are only catechumens and ill-educated, these elements form precious auxiliaries for the missionary, especially where the people only understand the local dialect. The special school for catechists (Training Centre for Religion Teachers) which it is hoped will be opened at Hsinchu (Archdiocese of Taipei) promises to better the situation considerably.

Individual conversions are made very difficult by the traditionally strict union in the family and the dependence of individuals upon it. For the young (especially the girls), conversion also sets obstacles in the way of a future marriage. It is therefore a great joy when a whole family can be persuaded to be instructed in the Catholic religion (in the mountains entire villages are being converted); the dangers which an individual runs in a superstitious environment are reduced, the Christian conception and way of life are more easily assimilated and the young people are already being nourished by the Christian spirit in their homes.

It must, however, be noted that Formosa does not only represent a difficult beginning. It also offers the possibilities of a new land, which the missionary coming from the continent with a wealth of experience, enriched here by new pastoral knowledge can freely exploit, owing to his not being bound by local traditions.

P. RAMSAUER, S. J., *Manila*.

### *Philippine Islands.*

**A Centre of Missionary Pastorate.**—*The Institute for Mission<sup>™</sup> Apologetics, Manila.* A centre of missionary catechesis has just been started at Manila, the capital of the Philippine Islands and the crossroads for the

missions in the Far East. Under the direction of the Rev. Burkardt, Visitor for the Society of Jesus to the missions in China and Superior of the King-shien seminary, now transferred, the centre is for missionaries who wish to survey the problem of religious instruction in heathen lands in order to restore its power of catechesis and initiation.

Such an enterprise could only have been made possible by the exceptional circumstances which have driven these men from their apostolic labours. Their wish is to collaborate in that great revival of the pastorate which, under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit, aims at helping the pastors of the Church in that heavy task assigned to them by Christ of teaching all nations. In this way the consoling certainty is once again verified : the persecutors of the Church serve in their own way the designs of Providence : for it is very true to say that a centre like this answers to a real need.

**What Are the Objects of the Centre ?** — To be more precise, let us say that the Centre has a double aim in view : the *first is that of considering the Christian message itself* with a view to giving, with God's grace, a living faith to our contemporaries, children and adults. This primary problem of the pastorate is the subject of many specialist researches in Christian countries : in the mission lands, now the field of work, it seems to us to merit all our care.

For the last thirty years, in catechesis, the effort, born chiefly in Germany and France, has mainly been applied to the adaptation of modern methods to religious teaching. The most urgent problems had to be remedied and the deepest gaps to be filled. (Do not forget that it was still allowed, a few years ago, that the catechism should be learnt without being understood : most of the effort was taken up by memorizing a too frequently hermetically sealed text). Now, the message itself is to be reconsidered. What is the good of troubling to teach a doctrine if it is not a science of life ? " I am the Way, " said Jesus : His Gospel should therefore be a good road leading to salvation and not merely a learned catechism class. What missionary has not felt that the message which he had to transmit to his hearers was often not suited to them because too complicated, more like giving a theological course than conveying the Good News ? The multiplicity of things learnt and duties imposed on us is such that they appear rather a burden to be borne than a liberating message. We wish therefore to think over the problem anew, replacing it in its historical context in order to try to solve it.

*The second aim is to adapt pastoral methods.* " Amongst the causes which explain modern man's spiritual distress, this one is unanimously placed : a failure in the method of religious teaching. " (Éléments de doctrine spirituelle, P. Motte). We may admit that enormous progress has been made in this matter in Christian countries. Is it the same for mission lands ? Without wishing to deny the excellent initiatives taken here and there, we must admit that there is much still to be done. The centre wishes therefore to study the existing methods and show how interesting they are, while suggesting necessary or useful adaptations.



*Special Interest will be Taken in the Liturgical Revival.* Who can fail to see the high pedagogic value of the liturgy, if it is suitable and alive, for teaching heathen as well as neophytes and old Christians. The progress accomplished, especially in Europe will be a great help to us. May we not hope that the attempts at a popular liturgy made on the mission in Christian communities where communal prayer has a capital importance and where the Creed keeps a strength unknown elsewhere, may contribute their mite to the common effort?

*What Are the Means of Expression Employed by the Centre?* — To achieve this double aim which goes beyond the needs of the Chinese diaspora, the Centre proposes to publish articles in different catechetical reviews, and especially in this well known "Lumen Vitae," published by the International Centre for Religious Formation in Brussels. Besides these articles, it intends to publish both theoretical and practical works on the same problems.

For a serious work which will be really of profit to all missionaries, it seemed to us to be absolutely necessary to enrich our catechetical library. Manila is at the centre of the missions in the Far East and its privileged situation allows an easy penetration into neighbouring countries. The great majority of the missionaries working there are Europeans and read French; moreover, all know English. It would therefore be most useful to have at their disposal the recent works on catechesis and the didactic material which could be exhibited at study sessions. Started under persecution, this Centre wishes, with the support of all those who desire to see the flood of atheistic materialism recede, to contribute to save that most precious possession of men, their faith in God and their respect for man.

J. SEFER, S. J., *Manila.*

## EUROPE

### *France.*

*The National Congress of Religious Education (Paris, 13-15 April 1955).* — The National Congress of Religious Education which took place in Paris from the 13th to the 15th April 1955 was an event of exceptional importance. It was the goal of persevering efforts and the starting point of new initiatives. The success of this congress marks the interest which priests, religious and lay, take in the problems of religious formation. A thousand were expected to attend; 2,600 were admitted; a thousand requests had to be refused.

The subject chosen was *Religious Education and the Stages in Christian Formation*. — A letter from the Vatican to Mgr. de Provençères, the Pre-

sident of the Congress, emphasized the importance of the questions to be discussed. "The Holy Father," wrote Mgr. Dell'Acqua, "Who has this cause (religious education) so much at heart, is happy to recognize the work accomplished in this sphere and He hopes that the present Congress may be, for the Catholics of your country, the occasion for a more lively consciousness of the capital importance of this problem and the necessity for a unanimous effort on the part of clergy and laity."

The importance of this document leads us to transcribe the principal passages :

"If we consider the general conditions of catechetical teaching and religious formation, we have to recognize that there still exist in France numbers of children who are not receiving the riches of revealed truth to which they have the right, under satisfactory conditions of time, place or method. His Holiness did not fear in the past to denounce religious ignorance as an "open wound in the Church's flank," everything must now be done to remedy this evil efficiently.

Action must be taken in the Christian schools, in order to achieve constant progress in religious instruction and education, so as to offer Catholic families the possibility of sending their children to a school in conformity with their Faith. But the Church has the intention of providing the substantial nourishment of the truth to all the baptized, and, since the greatest number attend non confessional institutions, the problem of their religious instruction comes before the pastors of souls with all the more acuteness and urgency. With regard to them, the Church, faithful to her mission, cannot renounce her right and duty to do everything possible to develop the baptismal grace in these children by a formation of mind and heart carried out in just conditions of freedom and efficiency.

But the problem is not only one concerning the schools. Are not the first catechists the parents of the children, to whom the Lord has entrusted the lofty and beautiful responsibility of awakening these young souls and of giving them a Christian education ?

How many parents of today are conscious of this mission ? How many take the trouble to acquire the knowledge and skill for so delicate a task ? Pastors must consider it as one of their important duties to prepare Christian parents for their role as educators and catechists.

And if the family constitutes the child's first Christian community in which his faith develops, it is also important that all the active forces of the parish help, under the priest's guidance, in this primary task of catechetical instruction, which ought to benefit from all the latest methods of pedagogy. The witness and example of a live parochial community are, for the adolescent who is growing up in the world of today, the necessary complement of his catechetical formation. And it is here that the Catholic Action Movements have a decisive role to play, both in the parochial sphere and in the various surroundings in which the faith of these young people must be manifested. These Movements should not therefore look upon the work of teaching the Catechism as foreign to their aims.

Finally, for such an important duty the Church needs fully qualified teachers. Priests, religious, lay catechists, each according to his or her own sphere, should pay the greatest attention to their doctrinal and pedagogical preparation ; as much as, and more than, secular studies — but in a manner in accordance with its supernatural aspect — religion ought to be taught in the most favourable intellectual and moral conditions. We rejoice at the efforts already made in this direction by catechetical institutes."

We cannot recapitulate all the speeches.<sup>1</sup> It will be enough to give the broad lines of two of them and the lesson which can be drawn from the proceedings as a whole.

The Rev. J. COLOMB, director of the National Catechetical Centre, gave the opening address on *The conditions and permanent aims of religious instruction*. He spoke of the permanent aim of the catechist : to *instruct the living faith* of the child and adolescent, and he examined how this instruction presupposed the *reception by a human being of the word of God*.

The first and most important obligation of the catechist is therefore to *transmit the word of God*. How can he do this in human language ? The means at his disposal are clumsy and apt to materialize and humanize the transcendent message : images and comparisons run the risk of satisfying the imagination but arresting the ascent of faith ; the explanations and proofs which content the mind may hinder the soul from rising to the mystery of God ; formulae retained by the memory cannot assuage the heart which seeks God. In short, there must always be a tension between the human expression, inadequate but necessary, and the obscurity of the faith in which the living God reveals Himself. Asceticism is necessary for catechist and disciple ; human instruments must be employed, but more emphasis laid on the invisible grace which is continually calling for an ascent in contemplation and love.

Faith is not only *obscure* and consequently allergic to too human lights ; it is also *free*. The catechist is tempted to ensure that his disciple shall make a good use of his liberty by giving it the guarantee of habits, practices, and the support of social customs. This is a good way to assist the weakness of the young, but he must be careful lest legalist preoccupations and conformism extinguish the spirit. Religious formation should be above all the opening of the soul to the call and power of the Spirit.

If the catechist has to transmit the word of God, it is to a *man* that he has to tell it. The human condition of those who listen must therefore be respected as God respects them : he must make himself all things to all men ; take into account age, character, and environment, distinguish the essential evolution of faith (which depends on grace and on the generosity of the subject) from its accidental evolution (which depends on age, circumstances, etc.).

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<sup>1</sup> The general speeches were as follows : J. COLOMB, P. S. S., Director of the National Catechetical Centre : *The conditions and permanent aims of religious instruction*. — Mlle F. DERKENNE : *The necessary preparation* (before the age of reason). — The Rev. P. J. RIMAUD, S. J. : *Christian initiation* (at the age of reason). — His Grace Mgr. GARRONE, Coadjutor-Archbishop of Toulouse : *Didactic instruction* (at school age : 9-12). — H. LE SOURD, P. S. S., Curé of St. Sulpice. *The true and false aspect of Solemn Communion*. — J. VIMORT, Sub Director of the E. R. in the Lyons diocese : *Difficult catechesis* (at the age of contradiction and incertitude : 12-14) : The Rev. DE REBOUL, O. F. M., National Chaplain to the technical J. E. C. : *Directions for the catechesis of adolescents* (arriving at achieving a personality). — His Grace Mgr. DE PROVENCHÈRES, Archbishop of Aix : *Religious instruction and the mission of the Church* (concluding speech).

The succeeding speeches dealt with the necessary stages in normal religious formation : before the age of reason, at the age of reason, at school age, at the time of the Solemn Communion and during adolescence.

Among these addresses <sup>1</sup> — all of them enlightening — we will choose that of Mgr. GARRONE, on *Didactic instruction at school age* (9 to 12).

The eminent speaker demonstrated the need for a didactic instruction, but defined the conditions which made it profitable. First, an essential remark : a concept without intuition is empty and the acquisition of a formula of the catechism is of no use without experience of faith. It must, alas, be recognized that didactic instruction is often given where faith is lacking : it is sowing in a wind.

However, didactic instruction is necessary, for a Christian must *know* what he *believes*, and man's mind must be led to commit itself to faith. But several conditions should be respected : *unity*, for the catechism cannot be an anthology of theological formulae and a firm synthesis should mark the coherence of the whole ; *continuity*, for the instruction cannot be closed within the limits of 3 or 4 years ; it must be prepared from infancy and be developed until the end of adolescence and beyond ; *density*, that is to say, the continual maintenance of contact between didactic instruction and its sources : the living Church with the Bible and liturgy. The pupils should always perceive the actuality of the message transmitted and the doctrine explained, in the souls of believers, the charity of communities and their own Christian experience.

*Conclusion.* — The speeches and deliberations of the Congress threw light upon the absolute necessity for a religious formation which is not limited to the 2 or 3 years of a purely didactic " catechism, " but which develops all through growth and mobilizes all the living forces of the Church.

We cannot do better than to transmit the conclusions proposed at the end of the Congress and approved by the Bishops who are members of the Committee of Religious Instruction.

1. Religious instruction, to be efficacious, should be given during the whole of the educative period. Begun in early childhood, it should be continued during adolescence, youth, and even when adult.

Teachers should do all that is possible to attain this aim.

2. Parents are the " first catechists " of their children, above all through the example of their Christian life. They must be helped to become aware of their mission and be prepared for it. If they fail in their duty they must be replaced, but even then the task of ensuring their formation must not be neglected, as far as it can be achieved.

3. Religious instruction at the age of reason, aims at the awakening of a personal religious life ; it is a preparation for the sacraments of Penance, Confirmation and the Eucharist.

4. Religious instruction of children of 9 to 12 takes on a more accentuated didactic form, to provide a firm framework for faith. But this instruction will not be efficient if it is not inserted into an authentic religious life.

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<sup>1</sup> We cannot even enumerate the subjects debated in the numerous discussions.



In the very frequent case — which is, however abnormal and dangerous — where the child comes to the catechism classe at 9 years old, without the necessary preparation, it is indispensable that a year's instruction should first ensure the awakening of his religious life.

5. The Solemn Communion is unfortunately too often considered as the end of religious instruction. Priests and catechists will apply themselves to presenting it as a stage in religious formation.

By reciting his Credo and sharing in the Eucharist, the child is professing the faith of his Baptism in a more conscious manner.

By welcoming and supporting the child, the adult community is engaging itself to help him in the new stage which is opening before him.

6. At the age of pre-adolescence when the personality is seeking to assert itself, and that of adolescence in which it is forming, religious instruction should comprise an authentic catechesis, integrated both into the daily life of the child and a pastorate of the whole.

7. Catholics should become more and more aware of the capital importance of the problem of religious instruction. Catholic newspapers and magazines should echo the words of the Pope and Bishops and be the valuable instruments of this awareness.

8. Catholic opinion should be aroused as to the unfavourable conditions of " time, place or methods " in which so often religious instruction has to be imparted.

In particular, it is of capital importance to obtain a time which is really and psychologically useful, so that religious instruction can be given in an efficient and sufficient manner, on a par with the corresponding secular culture.

It is necessary to make it understood that the liberty of receiving a solid religious instruction is an integral part of the liberty of conscience as much as liberty of worship.

9. Only a unanimous effort on the part of clergy and faithful can ensure the solution of the problem of religious instruction : all the living forces of the parish should collaborate, under the direction of the priest, in this primary task :

— The witness and example of a live parochial community are for both child and adolescent, the necessary complement of his catechetical formation.

— The Movements of Catholic Action have a decisive role to play in this formation, as much on the parochial plane as in the various milieux of life : they must not consider this necessary collaboration as being outside the scope of their activities.

In order to put their whole parish in a state of catechetical mission, the priests will institute, in conformity with the desire of the Holy See, the " Confraternity of Christian Doctrine " and " Catechism Days. "

10. It is for the diocesan Catechetical Office, the base of all organization of religious instruction, staffed by competent priests and efficacious means of action, to " control, promote and perfect everything concerning religious instruction in the diocese : " it alone has the task of coordinating all the efforts made in this direction.

P. RANWEZ, S. J., *Brussels*.

### *Greece.*

**Religious Formation of Youth.** — The religious instruction of youth is of capital importance for the future of Catholicism in our country, but it presents a problem of extraordinary difficulty, the adequate solution of which is far from having been found.

It must first be noted that the number of Catholics in the whole of Greece is from 40 to 45,000. In the dioceses of Syros, Tinos and Corfu they are

chiefly grouped in small country parishes. In the diocese of Athens and the Vicariate of Salonica, they are distributed in the two large towns. There are some again in other small towns where there is neither priest nor church; they are the Catholics of the "diaspora."

In the diocese of the capital, a better organization has just been started by the new archbishop. The prolonged vacancy of the see of Athens, a vacancy lasting four years, has been unfortunate for Catholicism, for no important measure could be taken and no positive work done in response to the change of mentality created by the war and the new desires which the after-war years have aroused, more or less consciously, in souls.

In Greece we have no national Centre of Catholic Action, nor national bureau for catechetical formation and instruction, nor any school for liturgical and biblical instruction, nor other centres of the kind which could give a universal direction to work and action. Each bishop directs the different activities of his diocese according to his own ideas and methods. More unity on this extremely important matter is now being sought.

Naturally, we have no periodical for direction, coordination and training in the above spheres. It would be very difficult to run one, considering the small number of Catholics and especially young people belonging to Catholic Action, among whom there are country people, workers, students and employés. The most modest of reviews suited to a particular group of boys or girls could not possibly cover its expenses.

As for the catechism and catechetical publications, we have only had six different editions since 1913. Five of them consisted of booklets with questions and answers. The last, in three volumes, was found to be too difficult for young workmen or landworkers, and even stiff for students. There is now under preparation a series of books on the subject, taking into account what has been accomplished in catechesis in other Catholic countries. In the beginning of this year there will probably be an interdiocesan meeting for the discussion of the problems of the catechism and its teaching.

Christian doctrine is taught regularly in the elementary schools where there is a majority of Catholics, as, for instance, in Catholic villages and the secondary schools run by Religious or Brothers. Naturally, the orthodox pupils, even in our Catholic schools, receive their own teaching.

Another source of Christian life which remains entirely unexploited is the liturgy and the Bible. The Catholics attend Mass without understanding much about it, nothing sometimes, for there are no missals in Greek, not even Sunday missals. Neither Catholics nor Orthodox read the Gospels, as there is no translation of the Bible in modern Greek. Such a translation is forbidden by law, that is to say, by the S. Synod. These two great gaps will, it is hoped, be filled in a few years' time by a missal and translation of the Gospels in modern Greek.

Good work is being done by the *Bonne Presse*. It publishes a weekly periodical and spiritual books on ascetism and the Lives of the Saints, mostly translations.

MARC MACRIONITIS, S. J.,  
Archbishop of Athens.

*Italy.*

**Religious Instruction in the Primary Schools.** — *Historical facts.* — Religious instruction in the primary schools in Italy goes back, in its official form, to the law of the 22nd June 1857, article 10 which is thus phrased : " In the official institutes and schools, the Catholic religion will be the basis of education and religious instruction. " Before that, since halfway through the 19th century, religious instruction had been obligatory in all the schools in almost all the Italian states not yet unified. Successive laws, enacted in 1859, confirmed this state of things. Then followed a period in which the legislation was silent on the matter, and this lasted until the reform of 1923. Religious instruction in the schools was again enforced according to the law, and became the " base and crown of elementary instruction, in each grade. " This instruction had to be penetrated " from the first to the last class by the spirit which animates the religious work of Alessandro Manzoni. " The horarium, syllabus, handbooks and method are laid down by the ministerial regulations, which are full of wisdom and understanding of children.

The Concordat signed between the Holy See and Italy on the 11th February, 1929, defined and fixed the juridical and didactical methods suggested by experience and by the religious faith of the Italian people.

2. *Persons undertaking the teaching of religion.* — The Italian primary schools contain five classes, at the head of which is a master ; several schools situated in one zone constitute a " *circolo didattico*, " presided over by a director ; several " *circoli didattici* " make up an " *ispettorato scolastico*, " with an inspector over it ; the " *ispettorati scolastici* " of a province form a " *provveditorato agli studi* " with a provisor at its head. This account of the structure of the Italian schools helps to understand the functioning of religious teaching.

According to the law, the religious teacher in the primary school is the form master, who thus becomes the official catechist. His doctrinal and pedagogical training takes place at the normal school, but, in the judgment of competent persons, is not sufficient to ensure a precise, efficient and complete teaching. The normal school includes four years of study, after the three years of middle school ; religion is taught for one hour a week during the first and last years, two hours a week during the two other years. The knowledge of the future master is rewarded by a certificate of " merit and profit, " without any final examination to prove his capability to give catechetical instruction in the schools.

The new teachers have an opportunity of increasing their religious knowledge through the *Higher Religious Courses* organized by the Ordinaries. These courses can be authorized by the Ministry of Public Education to confer certificates which are valid for the official examinations for posts in the primary schools. But here come into play a whole collection of laws, rules and regulations from the Fascist period ; these derive from state control and witness to a certain distrust of the competence of ecclesiastical authority.

These laws still remain in force despite the psychological and social changes in the world of children and the new political aspect of the nation. For how long ?

The teacher having the position of official catechist, the diocesan ecclesiastical authorities must assure themselves of his ability to give religious instruction. Besides the higher courses in religion, the annual inspection gives the Ordinary the chance to confirm the master in his charge or to discharge him.

3. *The Syllabuses of the Ministry.* The religious syllabuses, now in force in the primary schools, date from 1945. They were drawn up by the combined effort of the religious and educational authorities. The “ *Avvertenze* ” (preliminary remarks) are of great didactic interest. “ Religious education, ” they state, “ will be inspired from the first to the final class by the gentle figure of Jesus, as presented in the Gospel. The preaching of the divine Master will be an example for the teacher of simplicity and communicative force, capable of arousing the love of God and their neighbour in the children. In the two first classes, lessons properly so-called will not be given, but religion will be cultivated with maternal tenderness in the children’s souls, following the example of the mother who teaches her child how to pray by praying with him.

Episodes from the Old Testament will reveal to the child the relations between man and God. A special importance will be accorded to the life of Jesus ; the Gospel parables will be efficiently taught, with illustrations of the moral and social teaching which they contain ; the lives of the saints will be told, especially those who gave themselves for the good of humanity.

Nothing heavy should enter into the explanation of the dogmatic sections of the syllabus. The religious law should appear as the consequence of a spontaneous adherence of the mind to the principles of the Gospel and the relations between these principles and the moral and civil laws. The instruction may also find a motive for religious education in the other subjects of the syllabus. Suitable pictures, especially reproductions of masterpieces of sacred art, can make this teaching more efficacious. ”

The syllabuses are therefore to be *christocentric in their standards* in the biblical as well as the doctrinal section. There can indeed be perceived an *historical christocentrism* : The Old and New Testaments ; a *catechetical christocentrism* : dogma, morals, grace ; a *liturgical christocentrism* : liturgy ; a *hagiographical christocentrism* : the lives of the saints, especially the Italian saints.

The following are the syllabuses for the *five classes* :

*1st Form.* — Daily prayers and a short hymn. Sign of the Cross, Pater, Ave, Gloria. Prayer to Guardian Angel. Stories from the Old Testament and the life of Christ.

*2nd Form.* — Daily prayers and a short hymn. Simple talks on the prayers learnt in the first class. Prayer for the dead. Stories from the Old Testament.

*3rd Form.* — Daily prayers and short hymn. Salve Regina. Credo. Explanation of the Pater. Stories from the Old Testament. The life of Jesus.



*4th Form.* — Daily prayers. The commandments. The Seven Corporal works of mercy. Readings from the Gospels. Talks. Patron saints. Local hagiographical traditions. Hymns.

*5th Form.* — Daily prayers. The sacraments and their rites according to Catholic practice. The Seven spiritual works of mercy. The Gospels. Readings and talks. The liturgical year. Facts about the Roman liturgy. Biography of the saints. Hymns.

To obviate any eventual misinterpretations of the syllabuses — which might give the impression that the catechetical formulae of Pius X are excluded from the instruction — the higher Commission for the revision of religious texts, next to the Sacred Conciliar Congregation, has composed a “ *Guida d'insegnamento religioso per la scuola materna e le scuole elementari secondo i vari punti del programma ministeriale.* ” Among the preliminary notes, it is laid down that “ In the elementary school course all will be taught the religious truths contained in the *Primi elementi della Dottrina Cristiana* (extracts from the Catechism of Pius X), so that on leaving the primary schools the pupils will be ready for the religious instruction in the middle schools. ” This “ *Guida* ” defines, point by point, the additions to be made to the doctrinal syllabus properly so-called, and also mentions the various formulae to be explained and learnt by heart as much as possible by the pupils.

4. *The presence of a priest at the primary school.* — The fact that the master is the official catechist of the class often has its didactic and disciplinary advantages, but also raises a serious question : Is the master really able to give an orthodox, complete and fruitful instruction in religion ?

The majority of Italian teachers provide all the necessary guarantees, but the Church always wishes to see that the teaching is very faithfully given. Thanks to an agreement with the Italian State, the Ordinaries can name *Visiting priests* who accompany the official inspector when he makes his visits to the primary schools. The task of the visiting priest is to assure himself that the syllabus has been followed and in what way ; to question the pupils to see if they have profited by their lessons. The visitor then reports to his Ordinary, who, in his turn, in case of need, informs the provisor responsible and can discharge him during the following years from giving the religious instruction in his classes and replace him by others, approved by the schools' authorities. This is obviously a very difficult and delicate task, as too frequent sanctions might lead to the demand for freedom for religious instruction.

To complete the religious instruction given by the master, the Church, in agreement with the State, has instituted a complementary religious course, entrusted to priests named by the Ordinary and approved by the scholastic authorities ; this course consists of twenty lessons of half an hour each, during the class horarium, only in the third, fourth and fifth elementary forms. The Sacred Congregation of the Council has asked that the programme should be on morals and the liturgy. In the other cases, the priest named contents himself with filling certain gaps in the master's religious acquirements.

This complementary course is of great importance : in fact, it reaffirms the right of the Church to be present in the official school attended by Catholic children. Moreover, it enables the parish priests in the country to partly make up for the disadvantages of a scanty catechetical organization, lack of buildings and rooms suitable for teaching. In principle and in fact, the priest responsible for these “ *20 religious lessons* ” is the parish priest or his curate. They thus have the opportunity of seeing all their little parishioners in their school setting, at their desks, of necessity under the watchful eye of the master. The distractions of our times which crowd upon children, especially on holidays, through games, the cinema, and illustrated magazines, make it difficult to organize apart from the school any parochial catechesis, unless the parish has a “ *Casa della Gioventù* ” with its varied attractions.

5. *Catholic Associations of Teachers.* — The Italian teaching body has two specific associations, directed or advised by ecclesiastical authority : the Associazione Italiana Maestri Cattolici (AIMC) and the Movimento Maestri di Azione Cattolica (MMAC). Their task is to provide teachers in their educative role with help of a didactic, moral, cultural, syndical and especially religious, nature.

Recent statistics show that a large percentage of teachers are enrolled in the two associations : about 65 %. Each school year — according to Catholic Action plans — these two national movements undertake a special “ *campaign* : ” in 1953-4 it was concerned with religious teaching ; in 1954-5 it is on teaching the faith to the child. To support these “ *campaigns* ” great national congresses are organized which include speeches and studies, congresses in regions or dioceses, study days and days of prayer ; to these must be added publications, didactic material and lectures throughout the year. The formative action of these associations is truly providential and full of promise for the future.

6. *Pastoral aspects of the religious teaching at the primary schools.* — From the point of view of the priests and the Catholic teacher, the teaching of religion in the official primary schools seems to be *active* and *good*. It is protected by wise and definite regulations, and, above all, is supervised by diocesan and parochial ecclesiastical authorities. The good renown of primary schools from the religious point of view is justified by some interesting details.

1. The teachers, although receiving insufficient instruction at the official normal schools for their task, mostly supplement it by the higher religious courses arranged by the diocesan catechetical bureaux especially in the centres where school children are in greater number.

2. The presence and teaching of the priest, thanks to the “ *20 religious lessons*, ” permit the control of the content and pedagogical value of the master's teaching, and also any political ideology, which could be very harmful to the religious and moral education of the children.

3. The official syllabus of religious teaching is considered as being good and complete, insofar as it presupposes a complement or preparation given by the parochial religious instruction.

4. The priests in charge of souls cannot use the school buildings belonging to the State or the local authorities for parochial catechism classes on feast days and during the holidays ; but this although, to their disadvantage, equally deprives the other groups or institutions antagonistic to catholic doctrine and the religion of the majority of Italians of their use.

5. Textbooks for religious teaching are chosen by the masters, but they must be regularly approved. This approbation cannot be given by the Ordinary. The textbooks are inspected by the higher Commission under the S. Conciliar Congregation, which gives permission to obtain the *imprimatur* of the Ordinary, to be affixed bearing these words : “ *Cum servata sint omnia quae servanda erunt, imprimatur* ” and followed by his signature. In this way a publication is guaranteed to be in conformity with the syllabuses and directions of the Sacred Dicastery.

6. The masters generally make use of *active methods*, owing to its growing success in the sphere of secular education.

7. In Italy there are not many institutions which work for the primary schools in the didactic sphere, except for certain publishing houses of a commercial nature. We may mention, however, the *Scuola Moderna Italiana* of Brescia, which is celebrating its fiftieth anniversary this year. It was founded by the defenders of freedom of education and of its Christian orientation, such as G. Tovini, G. Toniolo, Fr. A. Gemelli, G. Molteni, A. Bresciani, A. Mauri, etc. The *Scuola Italiana Moderna* (S. I. M.) issues the review of the same name and that called *Pedagogia e Vita*, as well as other reviews for the maternal schools, mothers, pupils and teachers. The activity of this publishing house is intense : methods, handbooks, didactic material, all issue from it. Each year it organizes study groups and meetings for teachers, in collaboration with the *Universita Cattolica del Sacro Cuore* of Milan through the association called *Pedagogium*.

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### Spain.

**Catechism Day.** — Since the Civil War, Spain has made a great effort towards the catechizing of the young. In many places the parochial catechism has been renovated and methods which are better adapted to the religious instruction of children are being tried. In our country with its Christian “ mentality,” the catechist’s aim is still *instruction* in order to achieve an exact knowledge of doctrine. We will here quote the example of a diocese in which the *Catechism Day* is the culmination of the year’s effort.

The diocese of Santander, situated on the shores of the Cantabrian Gulf, in the north of Spain, stretches over nearly the whole of the civil province of the same name, that is to say, over nearly 4,000 km<sup>2</sup>, and includes 300,000 inhabitants. It possesses 384 parishes with 400 secular priests, so that the proportion of diocesan priests is one for 700 inhabitants. This explains why this diocese is among those in which there is a very real religious life. With regard to the catechetical teaching, we must acknowledge all that has been done in the last few years by the Bishop of Santander, His Lordship Mgr José Eguino, seconded by his brother, a most dynamic and earnest personality, Don Luis Eguino, the Head of the diocesan Catechetical Secretariat until last May.

The Catechism Day was first celebrated after the civil war of 1939, originally in Madrid and later in the other dioceses. The public diocesan catechism examination is the final preparation for this Day.

*The Catechism Test.* — Three competitions are arranged in the diocese according to a system of elimination: the parochial, the decanal and finally, the diocesan. All the boys and girls can take part who attend the catechism classes in a parish, a primary, secondary, or trade, school. Each catechetical centre can send up four boys and four girls to the decanal competition, one for each of the following groups classified according to ages: the *youngest*, from 6 to 8; the *medium*, from 9 to 11; the *elder*, from 12 to 14; and the young people of 15 or over in the *perseverance* classes.

The girls form a separate group from the boys and are questioned independently by their own examiners in the final test. In the decanal and diocesan examinations, the same questions are put to all, one after the other, care being taken to keep them apart from those following. The qualification is by marks, the maximum being 30. The champions of the deanery in the two groups of *elder* and *perseverance* receive a certificate of honour and go on to the diocesan finals.

In the decanal competition, the four children who have obtained most marks in their groups are proclaimed champions. At the diocesan competition, the boy and girl who have obtained the highest marks are called "Emperor" and "Empress" of the elder group. Those with more than 25 marks are called "Prince" (King), and those who have from 15 to 25 marks, "Infante" (Prince). Each one, as well as the champions and the runners-up in the *perseverance* groups, receives a prize; they are invited to dine one day with the Bishop and during the Catechism Day they take part with special honours in a magnificent children's parade.

A certificate signed by the Bishop is sent to all the participants in the decanal and diocesan examinations. The travelling expenses of the children taking part in the central examinations are paid by the diocesan catechism secretariat.

*The children's day.* — In conformity with the decisions of the decree *Provido sene* of the 12th January, 1935, a triduum of preparation is preached in all the catechetical centres. In every parish, the children's day is a day of Communion. At the parochial masses, there is a collection for the work



of catechism and the sermon of the day is a simple and straightforward one on the same theme. The Church, now as always, has more need of catechists than of famous orators.

The eve of the great day, the final competition takes place in the episcopal palace, the Bishop presiding. In this way, *the day itself* can be entirely consecrated to the public ceremonies and festivities. In the morning, the Bishop celebrates mass in the public square for all the children who have come from all over the diocese. A space is marked out in advance and reserved for each parish. In the centre are the children who are about to make their First Communion, receiving the Sacred Host from the hands of His Lordship the Bishop, while twenty or so priests will give communion to the other children in their places. All sing the same carefully rehearsed hymns and listen to the bishop's sermon.

In the afternoon the most attractive event of the fête takes place ; the great march past which brings together more spectators than any other demonstration. A veritable army of from 10 to 15,000 children go through the principal streets of the town with flags, standards and crucifixes ; they accompany decorated cars, called *sacramental*, representing biblical or catechetical scenes which are very instructive. Programmes are distributed to the crowd explaining the meaning of each car, making it a real religious lesson.

In 1948, at Santander, in homage to the Eucharist, the following cars took part in the procession ; Melchisedech, the Paschal Feast, Manna, Elias with the angel, the Marriage at Cana, the Disciples at Emmaus, the Appearance on the shores of the Lake of Genesareth, the Eucharist, sun of the Church, St. Tarcisius, the Holy Viaticum, and the car of the Emperors of the Catechism. In 1949, *Jesus the Missionary* was celebrated ; the subjects were : the Shepherds, the Magi, Jesus among the doctors, the Calling of the Apostles, the Sermon on the Mount, the Harvest is great, the Good Shepherd, the Sending of the Apostles, Fr. Damien, a Children's Audience with the Pope, Pius XII on the Sedia Gestatoria, and the car of the Emperors of the Catechism. Some parochial catechetical centres and some of the schools organized and decorated one of the cars.

The procession ends with Benediction in the square.

In 1953, to commemorate the centenary of the Seminary of *Monte Corban*, 10 km out of Santander, a catechetical army of 10,000 children, coming by bus from all over the diocese, met at the seminary. The organization was perfect. Seminarists with green armlets received the children, others with red armlets directed the traffic, others with white armlets took the children's provisions by deaneries and parishes and redistributed them at the dinner hour in the woods in the same way.

The Bishop of Santander celebrated mass in the *patio* of the Seminary, after which the titles and prizes of the " Emperors, " " Princes " and " Infante " were given out. Then everyone went to the woods to lunch. In the afternoon, seminarists with yellow armlets directed the folklore games, others with blue or rose armlets organized the games of the younger boys and girls. Those forming first aid parties wore a white armlet with a red cross. More than 20,000 people were present.

*The diocesan organization.* — In 1948, the catechetical organization of Santander published a pamphlet of 36 pages, called *Regulations for the annual catechetical examinations*, which put together a quantity of useful information in a small space. At the beginning are given briefly the elastic and efficient rules of the Congregation of Christian Doctrine. Then, the detailed programme of subjects for each of the four groups of children, adapted to their ages. The characteristic note of this well brought out programme is its completeness. It does not confine itself to the catechism, but embraces Sacred History, the History of the Church, the Liturgy, Apologetics, Asceticism, Christian Life, the Missions and Catholic Action. The four last subjects are an excellent innovation which we should like to see become universal.

In Santander province, the decanal secretariats are now functioning, composed of the dean and two other priests who, at the beginning of May, visit the schools and parochial catechism classes of the deanery. They conduct two examinations ; one, by questioning all the children freely in order to find out the average of religious knowledge ; the other is for the purpose of examining some boys or girls whom the Head presents to them as being aspirants for the decanal competition at the end of the month.

After visiting all the centres in their district, the inspectors have to send an account of the results obtained in the schools and parishes to the diocesan secretariat, as well as of the teaching methods employed.

In the town of Santander and its suburbs, containing 150,000 people, a delegation from the diocesan secretariat visits one after the other, all the catechetical centres, schools kept by religious, private schools and the State schools, carrying out the same process of interrogation and inspection.

If competition is good for children, it is no less so for the catechetical centres, to develop their zeal and fervour. This is achieved by another kind of competition with a view to gaining the title of *Exemplary Catechism*. With this in view, the parishes are divided into three categories : a) those of less than 500 ; b) those of 500 to 1,000 ; c) those of more than 1,000. The decanal secretariats send the results to the episcopal headquarters. To gain the title of " Exemplary Catechism, " the average marks gained must be at least 26 out of 30.

The results of this organization are considerable. They will not diminish in the hands of the new diocesan director, Don Juan Antonio del Val. This effort has instilled a sympathy for the catechism in the people as a whole ; among the children it has developed a keenness for religious knowledge ; among young people, it has aroused many vocations as catechists, in the catechists themselves it has brought courage to persevere, during their whole life, in this hard labour and, in the children's hearts who are prepared for the competitions there will be born priestly and religious vocations, vocations for teaching, catechists, or lay apostles.

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### *Sweden.*

*Problems of Religious Education in Swedish Public Schools.*<sup>1</sup>—The central problem of religious education in Sweden today arises from the gradual secularization of the public school. In the 19th century religion was, besides reading, writing and arithmetic, the main subject of the schools, and the religion that was taught was strictly confessional, Lutheran. Luther's Small Catechism was the principal text-book.

In the 19th century the religious homogeneity of Sweden gradually broke down. Opposition against the teaching of confessional Lutheranism in public schools was lively both among those who opposed all kinds of Christianity and among representatives of various religious movements, e. g. Baptists.

In 1919 Luther's Small Catechism was dethroned from the central position that it had held during more than 300 years. Religion should be taught in a non-confessional, historical way. The time reserved for this teaching was radically cut.

In 1954 the curricula introduced in 1919 were changed. Last spring was filled with lively debates on the new curricula, and especially the way of teaching religion was discussed.

These debates did not concern the main principles of how to teach religion in public schools. They dealt chiefly with the content, especially with the place of the Old Testament in the curriculum.

A professor of religion in a teachers' college, Dr Lemark, published in 1952 a booklet called *Gamla Testamentet och folkskolans kristendomsundervisning* (The Old Testament and the religious education of the public school). He wanted to postpone the teaching of the Old Testament until the 6th grade. To start earlier with the Old Testament, he wrote, would give the children a false view of God. They will be frightened by the wrath of Jahwe. They will further be shocked by the immoralities and cruelties in the Old Testament stories. Children must first get to know God as Jesus spoke of Him and revealed Him. Then they should learn something of how God has been glorified through the lives of Christian heroes throughout the history of the Church. Then, but not earlier, they are ripe to hear the Old Testament stories, which can be rightly understood first when the New Testament view of God has been settled in their minds.

Many, as well teachers as theological scholars, opposed this view. Theologians said that it reflected an antiquated liberal theology, which made the differences between the Old Testament and the New Testament greater

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<sup>1</sup> This very interesting article informs us about the different attitudes of the Lutheran Church in Scandinavian countries towards the problems of religious education. The author's own standpoint is not that of the Catholic Church ; yet it shows an equal anxiety to avoid the secularization of the Government schools (Editor's note).

than they are. Christianity is a structural whole, and the New Testament cannot be rightly understood without some previous knowledge of the Old Testament. Teachers emphasized the educational values of the dramatical stories of the Old Testament and maintained that the imagination of children should not be starved by a discrimination of the subjects of the Old Testament. The incidents told of children seriously shocked by the cruelty of the Old Testament are not representative, they said.

The debates did not end in any harmony, and the Government, which has the final word in these things, made a compromise, effective from the fall of 1954. What will from now on be studied in the periods of religion in Swedish public schools is the following.

In all grades much time shall be given to general conversations on moral and religious topics with the starting point in the experiences of the children. Some hymns from the hymnbook of the Church of Sweden shall be learned. In the 1st grade stories from the Gospels will be told, in the 2nd grade stories from the Gospels and from the Old Testament. Earlier the Old Testament was the main subject in the 3rd grade. Now children will this year learn of Jesus "with a restricted selection of Old Testament stories as background." In the 4th grade they will continue to learn of Jesus with the same background from the Old Testament. In the 5th grade they will hear of the acts of the apostles, Paul and Church history before the Reformation. In the 6th grade the Old Testament will be studied more thoroughly and church history from the Reformation to 1850. Finally, in the 7th grade a systematical study of Christian faith will be made together with a study of modern church history, missions and non-Christian religions.

In every grade religion will get 2 periods a week, which is the same amount as since 1919.

Compulsory school will in the coming years be extended from seven to nine years, but the curricula of the 8th and the 9th grades are not yet released.

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A similar divergence between various theological opinions is reflected in another lively ongoing debate concerning the religious education of the public school. Conservative theologians, representing mainly Lutherans of a fundamentalist school (with relations to the McIntire group in the U. S. A.) are attacking some new text-books of religion. In the manner of theological liberalism the text-book authors, who are active teachers, were cautious when writing of the miracles of the New Testament. The temptations in the desert were described as psychological realities in the mind of Jesus. Of the Resurrection they wrote only in an indirect way, of which the central character of this dogma was not made clear. Of the Ascension they said nothing at all. And so forth.

This is not Christianity, the leader of the fundamentalist opposition, Dr. Hedegård, wrote in a pamphlet, but a religion which is most closely akin to Reform Judaism. In the General Church Assembly in 1953 representa-



tives of this opinion tried to arouse the assembly to do something in order to get such text-books banned. And in May 1954 a conference of a fundamentalist character voiced the parole: Rather no religious education at all than an education which substitutes another religion for Biblical Christianity.

But the times are gone in Sweden, when representatives of the Church could decide on text-books used in public schools. The times are gone, too, when one interpretation of Christianity could be said to be the only interpretation permitted.

There is a difference between Sweden and Norway on this point. Religiously Norway is more uniform. There it can still be maintained that the religious education of the public school is a direct concern of the Church of Norway (Lutheran).

The leader of the very active Institute of Christian Education in Oslo, Bjarne Hareide, who is also the leader of the Commission on Education of the Lutheran World Federation, published in the fall 1954 a book, *Det gjelder barnet* (The child is the issue), in which he was most eager to stress the confessional character of the religious education of the public school. This education is the baptismal education of the Church, he wrote, the education in obedience to the words of Christ in Matthew 28: baptize them — teach them.

If the majority of the people does not want to be Christian, Church and State should be separated, Hareide wrote further, and the Church should withdraw from its obligation to care for the Christian character of the public school. But as long as the Church is the church of the people and affiliated with the State, it has the responsibility for the content of school education. State and Church have to co-operate in helping Christian parents to give to the children the education demanded by Jesus. In order to make clear what this means, Hareide quoted Luther and modern German educators alongside with the Bible.

In Sweden it seems to be impossible to follow the line of Hareide, and I believe that all over the world the religious uniformity of a people that is a presupposition of this view, will be found more and more seldom in years to come.

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The problem of religious education in public schools must be solved in an ecumenical way. It is the concern of the world-wide ecumenical Church to find expressions of Christianity, on which churches of various confessions can agree and which can be taught in public schools. The non-ecumenical view of the Swedish fundamentalists illustrated by the parole Rather no religious education at all than an education which is not according to the Bible (which means according to their interpretation of the Bible), this attitude is disastrous to public religious education in countries where various interpretations of Christianity are represented.

That attitude leads to the American solution: no religion at all in public

schools. Religious education relies completely on Church and Home, but in this way religious education becomes onesided and isolating, and many children will receive no such education at all. That American Christians are not happy with this solution is clear from the eager attempts in the U. S. A. to find new ways of teaching religion in public schools. I refer for instance to the book of Professor van Dusen : *God in Education* (1951).

The Roman Catholic way is to establish confessional schools, which compete with the neutral public schools. But this solution gives room for dissensions in the people and is very expensive.

Is there a unity in Christ — and there is, because Christ is one — there must be possibilities to express this unity. To find these expressions is the most important task of the Ecumenical movements of our time, and religious education in public schools is dependent of the success of this venture.

But so far ecumenical work has not given us expressions of Christian faith acceptable to all and specific enough to be the basis of an ecumenical Christian education. We are bound to our various and separated confessions. Religious education must still always to some extent be confessional, giving preference to the faith that stamps the milieu and is confessed by the majority of the people that the schools are serving. In Sweden, Lutheran Christianity must be studied more thoroughly than other kinds of Christianity, because most Swedes belong to the Lutheran Church and because Lutheran Christianity represents the main historical tradition of the people since the 16th century. In a country with another faith giving its stamp to tradition and milieu, that faith must be given main emphasis in the religious education of the public schools.

This can be done with deep understanding of the faiths represented by minorities in the milieu or represented only outside the country. These faiths can be demonstrated by representatives of them or by the teacher as if he temporarily represented them. The children from homes representing other faiths than the one that is given the main emphasis in school, should not need to be hurt.

In Sweden the present controversies about the religious education of the public school do not arise from differences in church affiliation, however, because the great majority of Swedes belongs to the established Lutheran church. They arise from fluctuations in theological research.

Text-books and teachers cannot be allowed to teach just their private opinions but must take heed of the opinions of the leading theologians of the country. But it is natural that the religious education of the school is somewhat slow in following the development of theology, because the text-book authors and teachers are primarily marked by what they learned as students. And they cannot change their teaching after every new turn in theology and closely follow any definite theological school, the opinions of which are always opposed by other theologians.

The present problems of the religious education of Swedish public schools demonstrate that there must be room in this education for various interpretations of Christianity, be it that they arise from various theological schools or from various church confessions. But the debates make clear, too, that

relativism must not be the last word. Truth must be sought and taught. In this search sincere Christians must respect the sincere search for truth of others and look upon themselves and the others as travellers towards a distant goal.

Sten RODHE, *Karlstad*.

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### III. — PUBLICATIONS

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#### FRENCH LANGUAGE

##### I. BOOKS ON RELIGIOUS METHODOLOGY AND PEDAGOGY APPLYING TO CHILDHOOD AND ADOLESCENCE.

The Abbé J. COLOMB's little book, *Plaie ouverte au flanc de l'Église*,<sup>1</sup> sets out clearly a problem of primordial importance : how are we to provide all Christian youth (and not only those in independent schools) with solid religious instruction ? The author considers that sometimes the preoccupation of organizing Catholic schools inevitable as it is, leads some to forget the urgent need to provide for the evangelization of the immense population in the State schools. Moreover, improvement in religious education should be for the benefit of all. Religious formation must be, not merely a preparation for Solemn Communion, but a continuous development throughout the child's growth, from infancy to the end of adolescence and even beyond.

After an important work on " L'éducation, direction de la croissance " Fr. J. RIMAUD, S. J., has produced a treatise, based on a series of talks, *De l'éducation religieuse*.<sup>2</sup> He deals successively with the baptismal foundation, the presence of God, religious customs, Sacred History, the teaching and culture of the Faith, religious instruction and practice, devotion to duty, interior life and prayer, the Christian sense of sin, the knowledge and love of Jesus Christ Our Lord, membership of the Church, finally, docility to the Master of our hearts. A propos of each of these points, the author considers how the instruction should vary with the different ages, from infancy to the end of adolescence. While paying great attention to the psychology and characteristics proper to each stage of growth, he does not forget that grace is a free gift and that, from the earliest years, God gives Himself in the fulness of His love. The author has especially in view the religious education of children from Christian families brought up in religious schools. His treatment is colloquial and clear.

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<sup>1</sup> Paris-Lyons, Vitte, 1954, 151 pp.

<sup>2</sup> Paris, Ed. Montaigne, 1954, 245 pp.



## II. BOOKS DEALING WITH THE RELIGIOUS FORMATION OF CHILDREN UP TO 12.

### 1. *Instructions for Teachers.*

*A. For all those responsible for the religious formation of children.* — *Pédagogie catéchistique*, by FR. M. TREMEAU, O. P., does not belie its title.<sup>1</sup> He studies how best the catechism lesson can be made fruitful. He assembles and synthetizes the views of the best present day catechists and the result forms an excellent book of advice as to the method of good religious instructions and the conditions for its success. The author gives very enlightening practical details.

*B. For Women catechists of children.* — Although meant in the first place for a restricted category of readers: the kindergarten teachers in the Parisian independant schools, and in spite of its reduced size (47 pages), the little book called *Éveilleurs de vie*<sup>2</sup> is likely to be of interest to a much larger public and be counted among the best catechetical handbooks. It has been written by a priest and two catechists: J. VERDIER, M. CHANON, A.-M. ACHARD. The basic principle laid down by the authors is as follows: "The religious formation of the infant does not consist in instructing him, teaching him prayers, "explaining" religion to him, but in putting him in touch with Someone." After the exposition of the doctrinal and psychological principles which should guide the religious formation of infants, their practical application is considered. There are valuable suggestions, in the manner of Mme Lubienska and Mlle Derkenne, as to education through the liturgy, the role of mime and teaching on prayer.

### 2. *Practical Books for Pupils and Teachers.*

#### *A. Religious instruction in general (catechisms, etc.). For 6-7 and 8-9.*

The most important event perhaps is a new edition of the *Catéchisme en images*<sup>3</sup> by the Bonne Presse. It will be remembered that the preceding edition was immensely popular. The large pictures, facing the written commentary, were a centre of interest and permitted instruction or revision at home, on holidays, for instance. But the style and appearance of these pictures was out of date and seemed odd to modern children. Everything has therefore been revised, both illustrations and text. The work is intended to remain a family book for the use of children of from 7 to 11 and their parents. Each one of the 83 pages of text (each forming a chapter to itself) has a corresponding large black and white picture. The scheme is biblical: in its broad outlines it is the story of salvation, the chief divisions being: the mystery of life and death; the living God wills to give us His life (the

<sup>1</sup> LANGRES, *Ami du Clergé*, 1954, 273 pp.

<sup>2</sup> *Directives de pédagogie religieuse (Classes enfantines)*, Paris, de Gigord, 1954.

<sup>3</sup> Paris, Bonne Presse, 1954, 166 pp., illustrated.

whole of the Old Testament and the decalogue) ; God gives us His life through Jesus Christ (the story of the life of Our Lord) ; how Jesus gives us His life (the Church and the Sacraments). In the course of each chapter short paragraphs including numerous passages from the Bible are inserted : there are questions at the foot of each page. The treatment is in narrative and is practical ; there are no abstract definitions, but care is taken to stress the living reality. On the whole, the text is very good. The illustrations have been carefully selected ; they are expressive and never displeasing, but we should have expected better in a work of such importance. We should also have preferred it to be more comprehensive and it seems to us that instead of 83 chapters it ought to have had something approaching 150.

b) *For 8 or 9 to 12 year-olds.* — There are several important innovations in this section. First, a *Catéchisme*<sup>1</sup> for the dioceses of Lausanne, Geneva and Friburg. It has become the new official handbook for religious instruction, but the bishop has asked that it should be used only for the " Higher course, " that is for those above 12. The little book, carefully bound, is illustrated with fine reproductions of the works of celebrated painters, photographs of liturgical ceremonies and conventional drawings. The plan is as follows : the truths to be believed are developed in the context of the history of Salvation ; grace and the sacraments constituting the ever present gift which God makes of Himself in the Church ; the duties of the Christian, consisting in his " living as a child of God. " It can already be observed that moralizing and rationalizing views are surpassed and that one is in a religious atmosphere. To examine the contents : we are struck by the great number of passages from the Bible, especially from the Gospels. If it is a matter of actual grace, a phrase from the Gospel introduces the series of questions and answers : " No one can come to Me unless the Father Who has sent Me draws him. " A question and answer follow : " ... We cannot act as children of God by our own strength, God must help us. Jesus said : " Without Me you can do nothing. " And so on. If we examine the style of the answers and definitions, we find that, as far as possible, the authors have preferred a practical presentation to abstract ideas. Rather than define an abstract word, they state a case. For instance : On the subject of Heaven they say : " Our greatest joy in Heaven will be to see God and to share eternally in His happiness. " To sum up, this handbook is one of the best contemporary catechisms.

We would draw attention to the new series of teachers' handbooks published by the Abbé J. COLOMB, *La doctrine de vie au catéchisme*.<sup>2</sup> This series follows three pamphlets of " Aux sources du catéchisme " which presented the Christian message to the 9 to 10 year-olds in its liturgical and historical context. They can be used with the second volume of the " Catéchisme

<sup>1</sup> *Cours supérieur*, Friburg, Imprimerie Saint-Paul, 1954, 367 pp.

<sup>2</sup> Paris, Tournai, Rome, Desclée, 1953-1954, 3 fasc. — I. *Vie nouvelle et nouveau royaume*, 231 pp. — II. *Combat spirituel et soucis de l'Église*, 226 pp. — III. *Portrait du chrétien et loi de charité*, 176 pp.

progressif. " The new series presents the message to the 11 to 12 year-olds in the context of the mystical life in Christ... and can be used with the third volume of the "Catéchisme progressif. " The aim is to help the catechism to communicate a first elementary doctrinal synthesis to the child. The three booklets are entitled: *Vie nouvelle et nouveau Royaume* (dogma), *Combat spirituel et soucis de l'Église* (Church and sacraments), *Portrait du chrétien et loi de charité* (morals). In each chapter the author gives theological considerations, then pedagogical remarks, finally a full exposition. To say a word as to the contents of the third fascicule "Portrait du chrétien et loi de charité," the originality and solidity of the method will be at once appreciated. After having considered God and His mystery in the preceding pamphlets, the catechist is asked to consider man under the influence of God or rather, "the love of God in the details of His work in man." The author says, "We will constantly evoke the effort of man, but, still more, the force of God's love." The aim is to direct the child to the imitation of Christ by way of an inner conformity, into a docility to the spirit of the Master. The fundamental principle must therefore be: "The children of God are guided by the Holy Ghost" and therefore "Christian morality is, owing to the Holy Spirit Who has created it, a spirituality." The virtues at the foundation of the whole of Christian behaviour are the theological virtues of faith, hope and charity.

**B. Reading Books.** — *L'imitation du petit Jésus*,<sup>1</sup> by J. PLAQUEVENT, is a masterpiece to give to readers of 6, 7 or 8 years old. The whole interior and Christian life is commented upon with exactness and depth in a dialogue full of spontaneity and freshness between little Jesus and the small child. It is an initiation into the life of contemplation and prayer admirably adapted to those ages. The illustrations are perfect.

### III. BOOKS FOR THE RELIGIOUS EDUCATION OF OLDER CHILDREN

(From 12 years: adolescents and adults).

#### 1. Pastoral and Pedagogic Instructions.

**A. Pastoral.** — *L'Hay-les-Roses, paroisse témoin*,<sup>2</sup> is the title of an interesting account of the parish entrusted to Dom DE FELIGONDE and his assistants. The parish of Hay-les-Roses is served by a community of priests and Oblates of St. Benedict. Their desire is to arouse and support the Christian life of the parishioners by virtue of the union of their priestly and religious group: they write, "A sacerdotal community, quasi-monastic in spirit, round which gravitates the parochial community or family formed of true militant Christians with whom we try to live in as perfect a union as possible, while sympathizers won over from indifference or paganism

<sup>1</sup> Paris, Ed. du Seuil, 1954, 205 pp., illustrated by E. Ivanovsky.

<sup>2</sup> By J. DE FELIGONDE, H. VAN HERCK and Th. MAERTENS, Bruges, Apostolat Liturgique, 1953, 51 pp.

form, in the beneficial and apostolic radiance of this double community a sort of halo of catechumens, is our conception of the parish."

**B. Religious pedagogy and methodology.** — In our preceding chronicle we have mentioned the results of an enquiry on "The religious evolution of adolescents" by Brother L. GUITTARD. The same author has completed his study by the publication of a *Pédagogie religieuse des adolescents*.<sup>1</sup> The interest of this work lies in the way in which religious methods and behaviour must vary according to the diversity of characters and temperaments with regard to religion. From this point of view, the author examines the categories described in his former book, that is, religious, indifferent, traditionalist, divided and fervent, natures.

## 2. Religious School Handbooks.

**Sacred History.** — *La Parole de Vie*,<sup>2</sup> by FR. GRELOT, in the series "Notre foi et notre vie," is an introduction to the bible meant for adolescents in secondary schools (forms 2 or 3). After a general description of the Bible, the author retraces the history of the People of God, then explains what the sacred books are (inspiration, inerrancy, interpretation, text). Then follows a presentation of the books of the Old and New Testaments. *L'Introduction aux Livres saints*,<sup>3</sup> by the same author, is a more thorough study meant for adolescents of the higher forms and even for university students or adults. The author shows how the biblical revelation led the Jewish people up to the Gospel and the Church. For the enlightenment of the reader, numerous biblical passages are explained. Maps, suggestive illustrations, clear typography, chronological tables and others, finally the indication of numerous subjects for study, make this handbook into a very good instrument for work on the two Testaments.

In the same series, the same author has produced a collection of *Pages bibliques*.<sup>4</sup> These are extracts from the Old Testament introduced, commented upon and divided into four sections: the people of God, the witness of the prophets, Judaism in the time of the Persians, Judaism in the Greek period. These pages will interest, not only the older schoolboys, but can be recommended also to adults who wish to initiate themselves into the knowledge of the Bible.

In the series "Enseignement religieux du secondaire," the Abbé J. DHEILLY has written, for pupils, masters and educated adults, *Le peuple de l'ancienne Alliance*.<sup>5</sup> The reader will find in it a general introduction to the Bible as well as a commentary on each book and each period.

<sup>1</sup> Paris, Spes, 1954, 310 pp.

<sup>2</sup> Paris, Belin, 1954, 176 pp., illustrated.

<sup>3</sup> Paris, Belin, 1954, 228 pp., illustrated.

<sup>4</sup> Paris, Belin 1954, 386 pp.

<sup>5</sup> Paris, Éd. de l'École, 1954, 486 pp., illustrated.



3. *Books for After-School Formation.*

**Holy Scripture.** — Amongst the manuals for instruction there are some works of introduction to the Bible which might be useful for after-school reading and study.

*Biblical Setting and Milieu.* — A splendid book: *L'Atlas de la Bible*,<sup>1</sup> by Fr. GROLLENBERG, O. P., has just been translated into French from the second Dutch edition. It is illustrated, not only by coloured maps which show the migrations, wars, divisions and settlements, but also by numerous photographs of sites, monuments and people. Commentaries bring the documents to life.

Bible readers will like the beautifully illustrated edition of DANIEL-ROPS' *Histoire Sainte*.<sup>2</sup> Without any further mention of the text, we must draw attention to the interesting illustrations: photographs of the countryside, archaeological documents, masterpieces of painting or sculpture.

Here are two albums of photographs which will help the reader to picture to himself the biblical events:

— *Histoire sainte. Paysages et documents*,<sup>3</sup> by DANIEL-ROPS is meant as an illustration to the sacred text. Fine photographs show the setting for the events in the Old Testament. Reproductions of paintings bas-reliefs, statues and sketches cleverly chosen evoke the civilizations contemporary to the Bible.

— *Dans les pas de Jésus*<sup>4</sup> gives the sites amongst which Jesus lived and some commemorative monuments, with interesting commentaries and very fine photographs in full-page illustrations (8 in colours).

4. *Doctrinal and Theological.*

The chief book in this section (and perhaps in the whole of this review) is without question that by Fr. L. BOUYER, *Du protestantisme à l'Église*.<sup>5</sup> The drama of the separation has doubtless never been analysed with such a sure diagnosis and the part which error has played has never been described so clearly, while being replaced in the context of its valid elements. Fr. Bouyer, himself a convert from Lutheranism to Catholicism, knows the facts of which he speaks from the inside, and his theological training allows him to discern and then to express with precision and clearness the difficult shades of meaning. In the first part of the book, the author shows how Protestantism was born of an authentic religious aspiration.

However, another current of thought arrived to obscure and even to contradict this aspiration by reducing to nothingness the hope of a beneficent religious enterprise. This other current of thought was the nomi-

<sup>1</sup> Paris, Brussels, Elsevier, 1955, 157 pp.

<sup>2</sup> Brussels-Amsterdam, Elsevier, 487 pp., illustrated.

<sup>3</sup> Paris, Fayard, 1954, 112 pp.

<sup>4</sup> Paris, Hachette, 1953, 123 pp., photos in colours and black and white.

<sup>5</sup> Coll. Unam Sanctam, Paris, Éd. du Cerf, X-250 pp.

nalist philosophy inherited from Occam. This philosophy empties beings of the reality bestowed upon them to make them the supports for juridical modalities. Thus the reformers, by adopting this framework for their thought — admitted also by the Christian thinkers of the XVI century — arrived at stating the forensic justification by faith, the independence of the believer of any control by the Church, a sovereignty of God beyond the true and good, such an authority on the part of Scripture that it excluded that of the Church. The drama of the Reformation and the rupture is therefore essentially to be imputed to a framework of thought foreign to the profound beliefs of the reformers. But this unfortunate encounter was the origin of the virulence of Protestant heresy and the sterility of the best religious intuitions of its founders. May it not be that the hope of a return to unity lies in a return to the sources ? The author states that the conclusion can only be “ to remind Catholics of what they themselves must do to make this return possible ; first, to understand the *primary* and profound meaning of the Protestant movement... then a renewed consciousness of what the Catholic Church itself is and what it signifies, its profound nature and all that it implies. Only then could they legitimately hope to reveal and make clear the way of return to their separated brethren which would be for them not a denial but an accomplishment. For lukewarm Catholics ignorant of their responsibilities, the Protestant movement, properly understood, brings back to mind many of their own treasures of which they have lost sight. But for the best Protestants, the very movement which bears them up, if we have interpreted it aright, urges them to leave, like Abraham, their country, family, what they call their “ Church ” and love as such ” (pp. 245-6).

Pierre RANWEZ, S. J., *Brussels*.

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IMPRIMATUR

Mechliniae, 17 Augusti 1955,

† L. SUENENS, *Vic. Gén.*

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ÉDITIONS J. DUCULOT, S. A., GEMBLOUX

*(Printed in Belgium)*

*(Imprimé en Belgique)*

